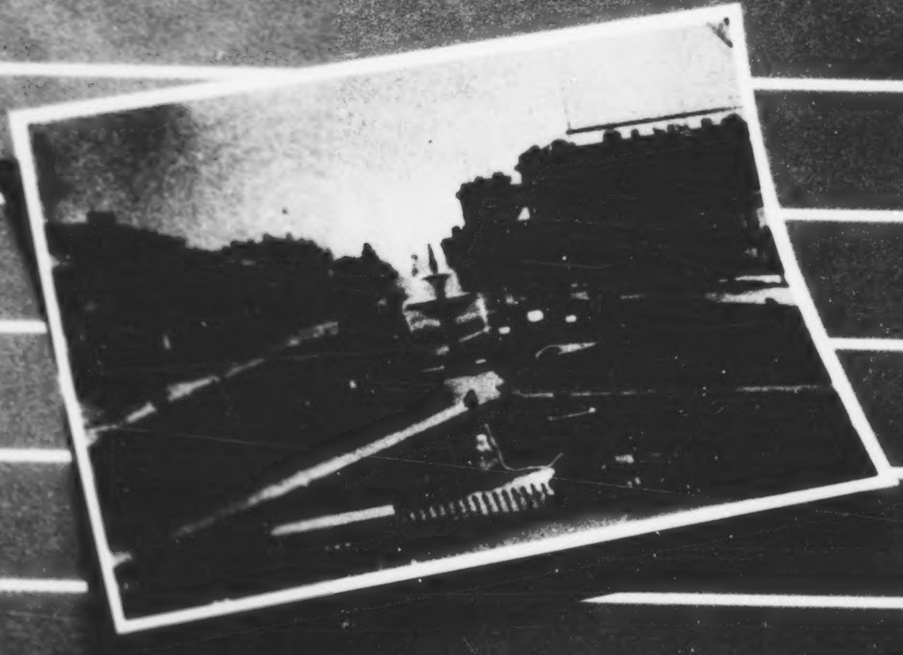
Urban Parks
IN ONTARIO
Part 1: Origins to 1860



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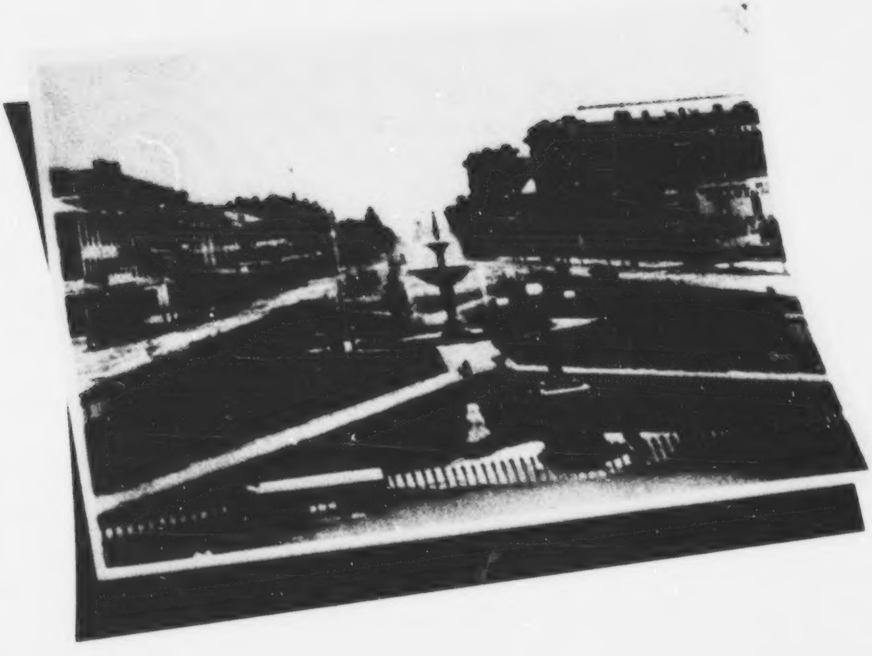

J.R. Wright

URBAN PARKS IN ONTARIO

PART I: ORIGINS TO 1860

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University of Ottawa

OTTAWA, CANADA
1983

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PREFACE

It was about 15 years ago, during my first experience as an instructor in the School of Landscape Architecture at the University of Guelph, that I began to realize that the historians had virtually ignored the origins and evolution of municipal parks and recreational open space in Canada. Recalling the phrase "not to know what comes before you is to remain a child," I felt that one of the cornerstones of philosophical understanding of park and recreation planning, site design and management was missing. I have collected information and photos about the subject since that time.

It has been a time-consuming task to uncover this story in the musty corners and shelves of archives, historical societies, libraries and newspaper morgues. Fortunately, it has also been a satisfying experience. It has convinced me that such an understanding is essential for those concerned about the urban environment and its future in a leisure-oriented society.

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Charlene Lambert in her role as a graduate student research assistant in the School of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Ottawa, who proved to be a "digger" par excellence. I also wish to thank my son, John Wright, for his artistic contribution in the sketches in chapter 2, 3 & 4. Also, sincere appreciation is due Betsy Comstock for her excellent editorial advice. Above all, I am grateful to the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation of the Government of Ontario for providing funds to publish this series on the history of public parks and recreational open space in Ontario.

J.R.W.

We are forever indebted to the past. It is the source of our very identity. In the present moment, which changes as we live it, the past is all we know.

Royal Bank letter
(March, 1977)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Urban space, from any time in history or any society on earth, can tell us much about the quality of life by its people

J.S. French

Virtually every village, town and city in Ontario today has an outdoor space set aside as a public park. This was not always the case. It is only recently, historically speaking, that lands were set aside for recreation with local government support in most Ontario municipalities. In fact, public parks as we know them are a relatively recent development anywhere.

Although it is often assumed that public parks and recreation areas were established in Europe and the United States many years before their appearance in Canada, historic fact does not substantiate this popular perception. Canada's first public parks were established less than a decade after the first park supported by local government funds was established in Britain, and as early as the first public parks in most of the cities of the United States.

Every public open space reflects and to some extent preserves the values of the period in which it was designed and developed. To understand the function of urban open space today, we must look to history. An examination of the changing role of the public park in Ontario over nearly two centuries will help to reveal it as just one element in a wide range of urban open spaces, filling educational, conservation, aesthetic, protective and recreational roles in today's urban environments. At the same time, it will give us a better basis for decisions affecting recreational land use now and in the future.

In the following chapters, the functions of several kinds of urban open space in western society are briefly traced from their origins in Greece and Europe to Victorian Britain and then to Canada, with a closer look at the first public parks in Upper Canada. The origins of public parks in Ontario are compared with the earliest urban parks in the United States. Finally, the rationale behind the creation of the first public parks in Ontario is outlined.

The Park: A Changing Concept

The concept of an urban park had its beginnings in the earliest recorded history. The Hebrews used the word **gan** to mean a fence or enclosure, used for protection against a human or natural enemy. The Hebrew word **eden** signified a place of pleasure and delight. In the English word **garden**, the meanings of **gan** and **eden** are combined to mean an enclosure of land for pleasure and delight. Although the earliest concept of a garden was of a private space, with the Greek agora a major step was taken towards the development of public space that was both a marketplace and a gathering place, and was used for a range of purposes including relaxation, conversation and strolling.

The English work **park** has its etymological roots in the French word **parc**, which in turn had Teutonic origins. The same word is found in the Irish and Gaelic **pairc**, the Swedish and Danish **park**, the German **pferch**, Italian **parco** and Spanish **parque**. In each case, the word describes an enclosure, protection from hostile elements, or a preserve. **Park** appears to have come into popular use in England in the late 1700s when it was defined as "a piece of ground inclosed and stored with wild beasts of chase, which a man may have by prescription or the King's grant."[1]

By 1851, large and popular city parks had been developed by local government in London and Liverpool. Although a park was still defined primarily as a place for animals, its function as an "inclosed place in cities for public exercise or amusement" had been recognized,[2] and this interpretation prevailed until the early 1900s. Whitney in the **Century Dictionary** of 1904 still gave as the principal meaning "a tract of land inclosed . . . for wild beasts of chase" and secondly,

> *considerable extent of pasture and woodland, surrounding or adjoining a country-house, and*

> *devoted primarily to purposes of recreation or enjoyment, and often serving to support a herd of cattle or a flock of sheep, or in Europe, stocked with deer.*

But he recognized the recreational function of a park in his third meaning:

> *A piece of ground, usually of considerable extent, set apart and maintained for public use, and laid out in such a way as to afford pleasure to the eye as well as opportunity for open-air recreation: as Central* **Park** in New York or Hyde **Park** in London.[3]

By 1924, parks had come to be viewed as a moral force in the community as well:

> *The refining influence of parks in every city has not. . . been sufficiently appreciated;. . . many a man, instead of idling away the hours in drinking, would gladly go with his family to enjoy such innocent pleasure.*[4]

The idea of enclosure had remained, and was manifested in the customary English wrought-iron fence, or in a hedge or shrubbery to enclose public parks even in the urban areas of the United States and Canada.

A definition of 1925 shows little change in the concept of a park from Whitney's definition 20 years earlier: "a tract of land generally large and enclosed, set apart for ornament or recreation, specifically laid out with walks, drives and recreation grounds; an enclosed chase extending only over a man's own grounds; an open square or plaza in a city; usually containing shade trees and seats as in Madison Square Park, New York."[5] Only in Fowler's 1931 **Oxford Dictionary** are the "beasts of chase" dropped from the definition, while the idea of a park as a tract of land "kept in a natural state for public benefit" has appeared for the first time.[6]

A 1978 dictionary defines a park as

1. A tract of land for public use in or near a city, usually laid out with walks, drives, playgrounds, athletic fields, etc.
2. An open square in a city, usually containing shade trees, benches, etc.
3. A national park.
4. An amusement park.
5. A large tract of land containing woods and fields, surrounding a country estate.[7]

After almost 150 years of evolution, the concept of the public park has come to mean an area of land, or land and water, open to the sky and set aside for recreation, managed and supported by local government and open free to the general public. At the same time, its meaning has become all-inclusive, recognizing both public and private ownership and both urban and rural settings, with both man-made and natural components.

In recent years, the term "open space" has often been used in a broad sense instead of **park** to include all urban land and water, both publicly and privately owned, that is open to the sky and reasonably accessible for freely-chosen activity or visual exploration, and that serves people and nature in an educational, aesthetic, productive, protective or recreational way.[8]

The original public park was a product of the Industrial Revolution in Britain and the adverse living conditions of the period, leading to a stirring of the social conscience of the members of Parliament to provide public open spaces through a series of Acts to permit the working classes to enjoy some

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of the benefits to which the upper classes had been accustomed for many years. In effect the public park represented a movement to a **public** garden as a contrast to the private gardens or "parks" of the well-to-do. It was viewed as a pleasuring ground, a remarkably different concept from existing commercial and social public squares. The public park became, at its inception, a single-purpose space, unlike any other public open space and set aside for the pleasure and recreation of all the citizens of a municipality. It was viewed as a place of natural beauty, albeit man-made, which would serve as an uplifting moral influence on the lower classes. The park emerged as a romanticized retreat from the noise, sin and sloth of the densely populated industrial cities of Britain.

The early public parks were viewed as pleasuring grounds where a rather narrow range of recreational activities could be carried out, primarily non-organized and passive ones. Historically, the idea of recreation appears to have had a much broader meaning than it is often given today. It was interpreted as including refreshment of both mind and spirit, including physical activity. The Y.M.C.A., founded in the mid-1800s in Britain, was based on such an holistic approach to the development of youth, and was identified by the symbolic triangle indicating spirit, mind and body. It was in the post World War II years that the term recreation came to be identified primarily with physical education. Fortunately, the term is now generally accepted once again in the sense of re-creation of spirit, mind and body.

Besides **park**, a number of other terms — **common**, **esplanade**, **garden**, **oval**, **playground**, **pleasure garden**, **promenade**, **square**, **walk** — have been used to describe urban open spaces. The evolution in the meaning of all of these terms, and several related terms, is traced in Appendix B.

NOTES

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1. Samuel Johnson, **A Dictionary of the English Language**, London, 1785.
2. **The Imperial Dictionary, English, Technological and Scientific**, Edited by John Ogilvie L.L.D. Blackie and Son. Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London, 1851.
3. **The Century Dictionary, An Encyclopedic Lexicon of the English Language**, under superintendence of Wm. W. Whitney, The Century Co., New York, 1904.
4. **The Large Type Concise English Dictionary**, Charles Annadale, Blackie and Son, Ltd. London and Glasgow, 1924.
5. **Funk and Wagnall's New Standard Dictionary of the English Language**, New York and London, 1925.
6. H.W. Fowler and F.G. Fowler, **The Concise Oxford Dictionary**, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1931.
7. **Funk and Wagnall's Standard College Dictionary**, Canadian Edition. Fitzhenry and Whiteside Ltd. Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver, 1978.
8. J.R. Wright, W.M. Braithwaite, R.R. Forster, **Planning for Urban Recreational Open Space**, Ministry of Housing, Toronto,1976, p. 7.

2. THE HISTORIC ROOTS OF PUBLIC PARKS

The allocation of specific areas of land for public recreation began about the middle of the nineteenth century in England. For the first time, lands were set aside under local government authority for the specific purpose of providing recreational opportunities for the public-at-large. To understand the changing function of urban open space over time, however, and speculate on future trends, it is necessary to move further back in history.

The recordings of the first urban settlements show that open space was used primarily as a public area for community assemblies and meetings, whether political or religious. The market square and the temple square were separated functionally and physically in the Middle Eastern cities of 4000 years ago. The temple or religious open space was enclosed, and the market square, which served as both a commercial trading centre and a social milieu, was loosely defined.

The excavations at Mohenjo-Daro (c. 2500 B.C.) indicated a grid system of almost one square mile including a sewer system, but the only open spaces have been judged to be courtyards relating to individual houses, not marketplaces or gathering places in any sense.[1] In eastern cities, generally speaking, the people met and exchanged goods outside the walls of the towns. "Gridiron or not, there were no 'squares' in Mesopotamian towns."[2] Egyptian towns, on the other hand, were irregular and haphazard in their layout. And while large courtyards within Egyptian temples or palaces appeared to be "squares," they did not function as such.[3]

It was with the Greeks, and the newly conceived notion of the relationship of the individual to the state, that the square emerged as a public social space. "The Indian, Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations did not provide the political, government, social, and — most important — psychological conditions

In the story of life as a whole, it is the large acquaintance with history that gives us the best guide to the future. We cannot change the past, but we can build on it. We cannot wholly determine the future, but we can mould it according to what we learn from the past.

From a museum, Shrewsbury, England

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which would create the need for gathering places."[4]

Although some evidence of planning as a conscious collective effort beyond the construction of individual houses

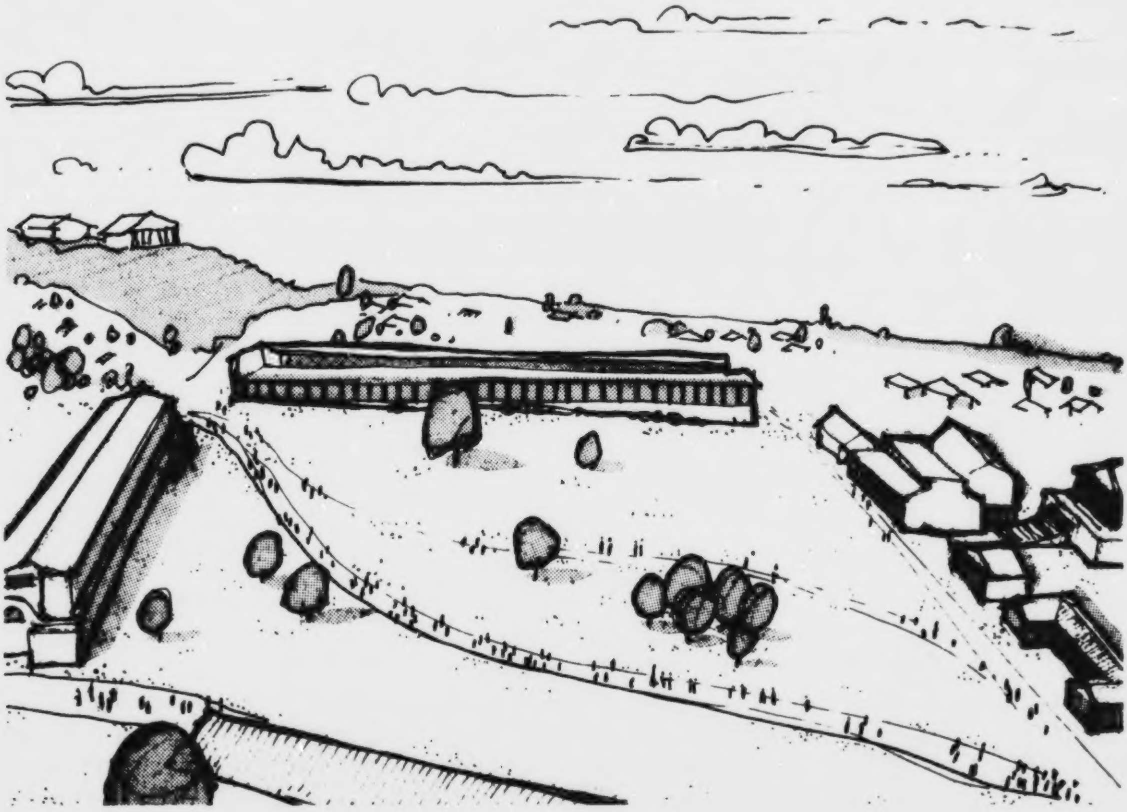

Fig. 2.1 Agora. Athens, Greece.

can be seen in Egypt and in India, it was the Greeks who shaped empty space in the design of a town into a public square that had a specific function. As Zucker explains it, "Only within a civilization where the anonymous human being had become a 'citizen', where democracy had unfolded to some extent, could the gathering place become important enough to take on a specific shape."[5]

The Greeks began to perceive open space as providing a function that was more than a mere counterpart to a physical structure. It appears that sensitivity to the environment and a growing awareness of human scale, as much as the need for a social and commercial gathering place, provided the rationale for reserving and shaping open space within the town. In the concept of the agora as a planned functional open space is the origin of the public square, and in more recent times the public park.

Indeed the agora was the heart of the community, providing both a sense of identity and a sense of place to the residents. It was clearly recognizeable as a public space, and resulted from the gridiron street system introduced into Greece and her colonies in the 5th century B.C. by the father of town planning, Hippodamus of Miletus, as part of the planned **polis**.[6]

As the focal point of the **polis**, the function of the agora changed over time in concert with the political and economic life of the city. In later times additional agoras were created. While the original, central agora supported public buildings and public functions, other agoras were the setting for the marketing of specific goods such as pottery, fish and meat, with markets for perishable goods separated from those for nonperishable goods.

Although the marketplace has remained an intrinsic element of most cities of the Western world, its function shifted to satisfy

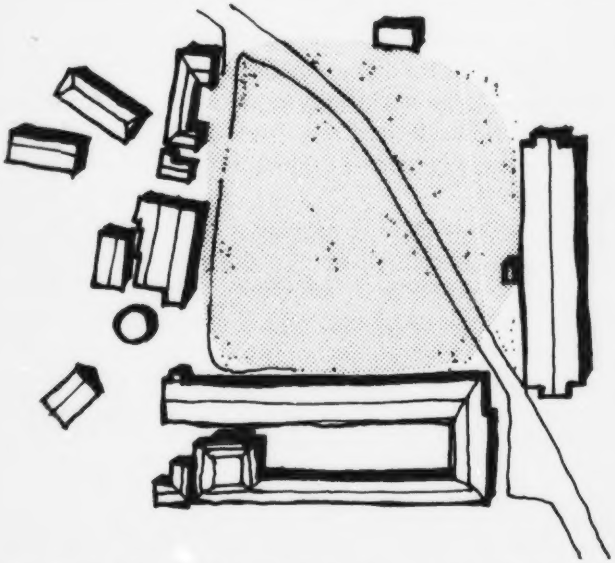

Fig. 2.2 Agora, showing spatial relationship to surrounding buildings.

specific cultural requirements. The practical Romans contributed greatly to both architecture and town planning in their sensitivity to the shaping of open space through "modification by specific proportions and by a superhuman scale."[7] The major contribution of the Romans towards urban open space was the concept of a fully enclosed (walled) room in the form of long rows of columns, behind which were situated offices, markets or other buildings all focussing on a rectangular open space. However, the Roman concept of open space was not unlimited views with the landscape as background. The Romans clearly created a defined shape, static, self-contained and superhuman, and a new form of the public square.

Middle Ages

The market square continued to play a dominant role in the towns and cities of the Middle Ages. The medieval city could be viewed as "a compact oasis of urbanism in a country setting,"[8] and a pride of citizenship emerged among its inhabitants to a degree that may not have been achieved in later historic periods. The towns of this period have been described as organic in form, and most were not places of squalor, dirt and slums as earlier historians would have us believe.[9] These early towns were built with defence against hostile invaders as the primary concern, resulting in radial street plans, adapted to the terrain.[10] The market square was located in the centre of the town. It was randomly shaped and considered the core, "the very **raison d'être** of the city."[11] The market square was often a

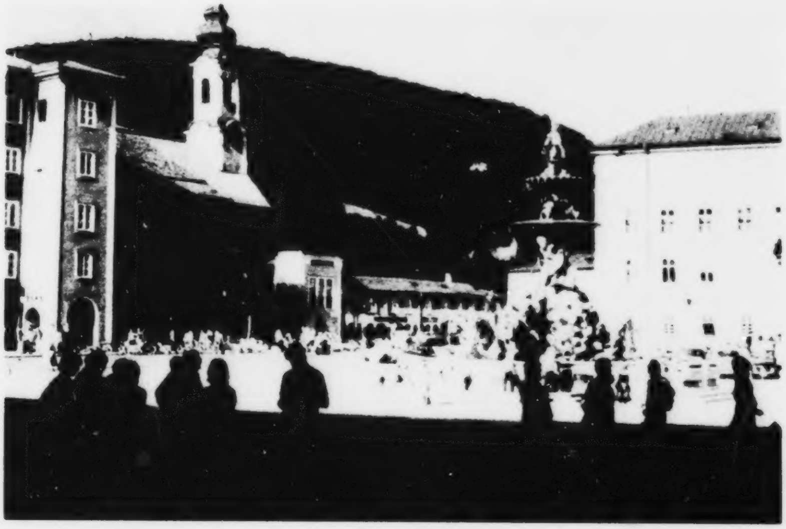

Fig. 2.3 Medieval town square — Innsbruck, Austria, showing proximity of countryside.

widened street that served as a place for market stalls as well as a place for public gatherings and ceremonies. "The marketplace recaptured, in fact, the function of the earliest forum or agora."[12]

There were gardens attached to the houses and the countryside was close, allowing easy access to rural fields and forests. In addition, the physical form of the town and its structure provided a comfortable human scale and sense of place for the citizens. In fact "until the twelfth century, at least, a sharp distinction between town and country is not discernible, as town and village were quite small and functional specialization had not yet taken over."[13]

Fig. 2.4 Villa Lante, Italy — a garden of the nobility, 16th. c.

Renaissance

With the Renaissance, and the rediscovery of classical models, came acceptance and development of the concept of towns through city planning. Aesthetic considerations began to play a key role in individual sectors as well as in the overall urban form. The site layouts of the large private gardens of the sixteenth century Italian nobility provided overall design schemes which achieved another step towards functionally designed open spaces that would eventually become public parks. Spatial unity and the use of monuments, fountains and flagpoles in gardens were notable accomplishments of the period in Italy.

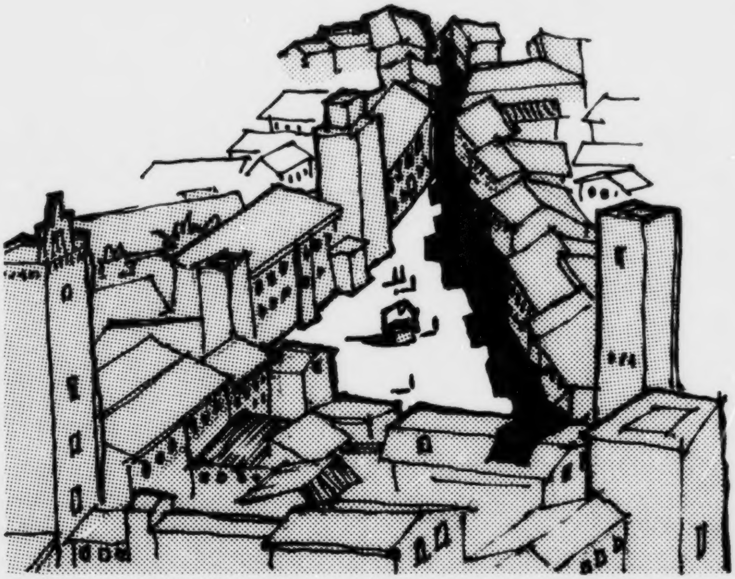

Fig. 2.5 Town square in San Gimignano, Italy.

It was in Italy as well that the public square began to emerge as the symbol for a city. St. Mark's Square in Venice is a well known example. The square had emerged as an essential and dominant public space, and was to remain so until the role of urban open space shifted to public recreation in the mid-1800s.

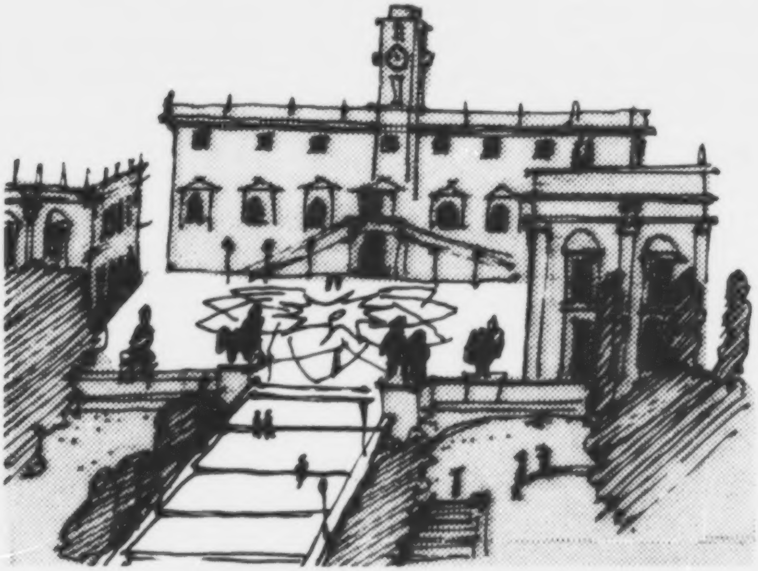

Fig. 2.6 Renaissance Square — Piazza Del Campidoglio, Rome.

England 18th Century

The public square was incorporated in the cities of England, particularly in London, in the early 1700s. These squares were reserved for the privileged classes and were located in well-to-do residential areas. Although there was a paucity of vegetation in the early squares, trees and other plants were added in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

An example of an early square is shown in fig. 2.7 with contrast provided by a square in London as it is viewed today, in fig. 2.8.

Many squares evolved from the existing greens or commons of communities that were being encroached upon by the

Fig. 2.7 A London square c. 1720.

expanding town of London, while other squares derived from old baronial estates. "English squares developed from the tendency of the British toward gracious living, bourgeois comfort, and, above everything else, the highest degree of privacy. That the greens were so often fenced in, with keys available only to the owners of adjacent houses, clearly illustrates the situation."[14]

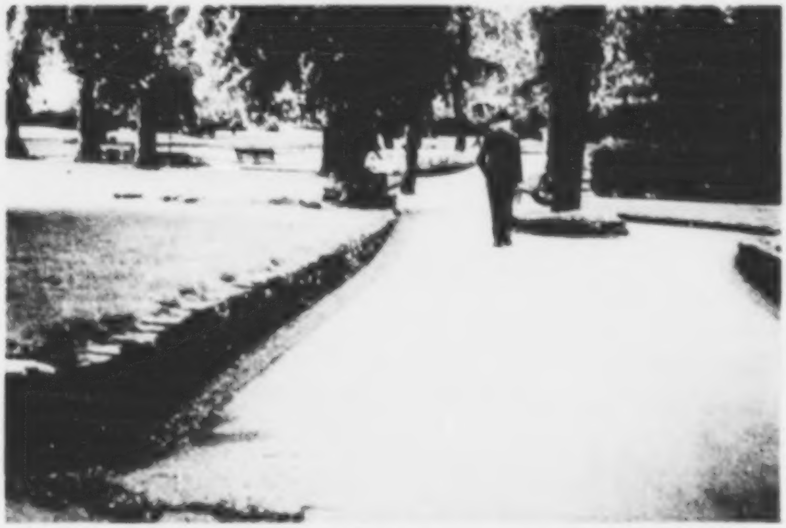

Fig. 2.8 Russell Square, London showing appearance today as a public space

Other types of open spaces set aside in the towns and villages of Britain were commons (primarily for animal grazing), market squares, church plazas, monument sites and military parade grounds. Open spaces or squares for public use evolved from the organic form of the settlement's physical form. Such gathering places evolved naturally in villages, trading towns, and military camps. Although in some cases these spaces were planned, most occurred as a result of natural growth, such as the intersection of major thoroughfares within the settlement, or the open area in the approach to a bridge, or the widening of a street in front of a church. The original public square provided a place for exchange of information, dissemination of news and gossip and a political forum; recreation in the form of games, teaching, lunch and conversation and general sociability; protection in times of danger and a place for military training and drill; trade in the buying and selling of goods; piety in the church plaza or square for worship and prayer. In short, the square was a multi-functional social and commercial space, unlike the public parks of today which are a retreat and escape from the sensory stimuli of the town or city.

The English Pleasure Garden

The fore-runner of the public park was the privately operated commercial pleasure garden of which there were many in and around London and the various resort towns such as Bath and Cheltenham in the eighteenth century. In addition to tea-gardens, some were appendages to taverns and public houses, while in others there was a wide range of entertainment including a small zoo, fireworks displays, music and dancing, and lighted gardens for evening strolling. Spectacular events such as balloon ascents were not uncommon. The gardens were normally open from April until September for three or four days a week. By 1877, the last of London's pleasure gardens had closed, the victims of changing public views as to acceptable amusements and as well to the newly developed public parks of the period.

Many parks originated as land set aside for hunting under the control of a wealthy land owner, or the land around a gentleman's house. Many of these parks or gardens were acquired in later years for public use. As Chadwick has pointed out, "In fact, the park systems of English towns would be fragmentary indeed, were it not for those parks originally laid out to enhance the mansion of some local dignitary."[15] Before the mid-1800s, the Royal Parks of London and other Crown lands were private, open only to nobility and to the well-to-do on special occasions.

However, while lacking public open space, "the eighteenth century town remained healthy, for the fabric of the town still contained many gardens and open areas for private use apart from the newer private gardens provided by baroque schemes of town improvement, whilst the open country was close at hand for all to walk in."[16]

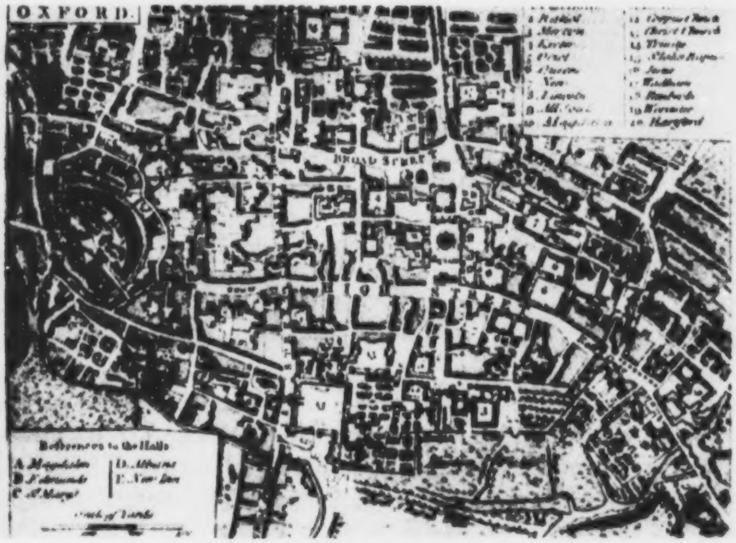

Fig. 2.9 Oxford, England in the 18th c. showing marketplace and private gardens.

Examples of persistently successful open spaces established long before the first public parks were established are St. Peter's Square in Rome; Boston Common (1640s); the residential public open spaces of Savannah, Georgia planned in 1733, with a series of 48 lots grouped around a public square; and indeed the Halifax Common established in 1763. But such spaces were limited in their function, particularly the commons which served primarily as common grazing lands.

England
The First Public Parks

The move to designate lands as public parks came about as the result of the Industrial Revolution and the increasing concern for the health and sanitary conditions of urban areas. Increasing population densities and overcrowded housing, along with improper and totally inadequate sanitary conditions caused by a lack of drains, sewers, ventilation and clean water in the industrial towns led to severe health problems among the working classes. Charles Dickens and other nineteenth century writers dramatized the living conditions of this period in Britain.

That there was a general concern about the conditions of the urban environment is evidenced by the number of Royal Commission reports on the subject, such as the **Report of the Select Committee on the Health of Towns** (1840), and the **Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population** (1842). The earlier **Report from the Select Committee on Public Walks** (1833) pointed out that walks were the best means to promote the well-being and health of the citizens. The Victorians, however, were primarily concerned with the worker's health as it affected production:

> *A man walking out with his family among his neighbours of different ranks, will naturally be*

> *desirous to be properly clothed, and that his wife and children should be also: but this desire duly directed and controlled is found by experience to be of the most powerful effect in promoting Civilization and exciting Industry.*[17]

A series of Acts passed by Parliament between 1833 and 1843 provided that, through taxes, public funds could be provided for improvements such as sewers and sanitation systems, and for public parks.

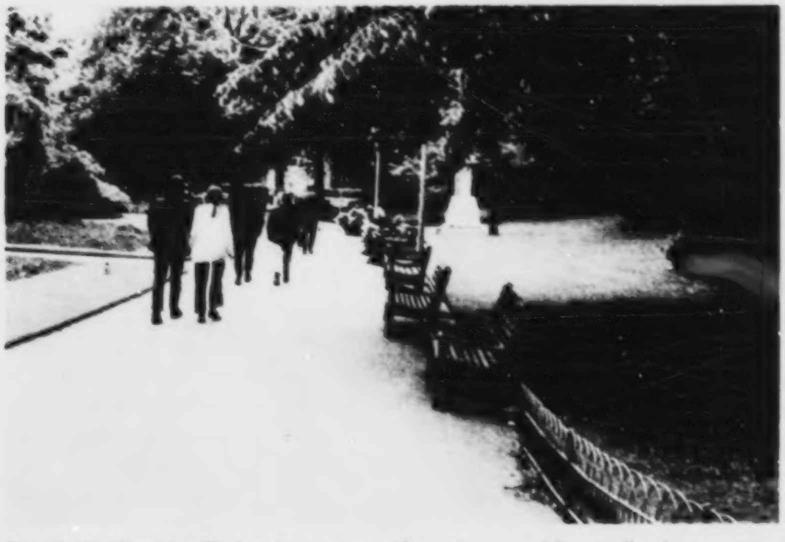

Fig. 2.10 Victoria Embankment — showing a public walk that was a fore-runner of public parks.

The first park approved by Parliament specifically for public recreation was Victoria Park in London's East End in 1842. It was the result of a reform group pressing Parliament to improve the social climate of London by creating better conditions in the East End.

The second area of land purchased and developed for such public purpose under the new legislation was Birkenhead Park in Liverpool in 1843. Of the 225 acres acquired, 125 acres were set aside for the free recreation of the public and the rest was sold for building sites.[18] The park included cricket grounds, archery fields, winding carriage drives and separate pathways for walking, irregular bodies of water and undulating topography. Birkenhead Park, which was designed by John Paxton, proved highly successful and led to the establishment of public parks in most towns in Britain in the period after 1850, as well as the opening of the Royal Parks in London to public access.

Fig. 2.11 St. James Park, London, England, originally a Royal Park.

Although there was a movement in Germany to create public parks a decade or so before the English movement, the public park movement is generally considered to have been born in Victorian Britain. Indeed, "there is no recorded instance of outdoor recreational space on land acquired and owned by the people themselves, developed with public funds and open indiscriminately to all, before the creation of Victoria and Birkenhead parks."[19]

NOTES

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1. Paul Zucker, **Town and Square**, Columbia University Press, New York, 1959, p. 20.
2. Ibid., p. 23.
3. Ibid., p. 25.
4. Ibid., p. 26.
5. Ibid., p. 19.
6. Ibid., p. 36.
7. Ibid., p. 45.
8. Cecil Stewart, **A Prospect of Cities**, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1966, p. 79.
9. Ibid., p. 78.
10. John H. Mundy and Peter Riesenberg, **The Medieval Town**, Van Nostrand, Toronto, 1958, p. 40.
11. Stewart, p. 78.
12. Lewis Mumford, **The City in History**, Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., New York, 1961, p. 307.
13. Mundy and Riesenberg, p. 41.
14. Zucker, p. 199.
15. G.F. Chadwick, **The Park and the Town**, Architectural Press, London, England, 1966, p. 20.
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3. SETTLEMENT PATTERNS IN UPPER CANADA

It is helpful to have a broad understanding of the socio-economic conditions in Upper Canada in the period between 1790 and 1850, to begin to appreciate the factors that led to the establishment of public parks in a still young and developing British colony. Obviously the conditions, the settlement patterns and the economic base of Canada contrasted sharply to those of Britain. Yet despite its status as a fledgling colony, public parks emerged in Upper Canada shortly after their establishment in Britain. How and why are the key questions. This section provides a background to the establishment of the first public parks in Upper Canada.

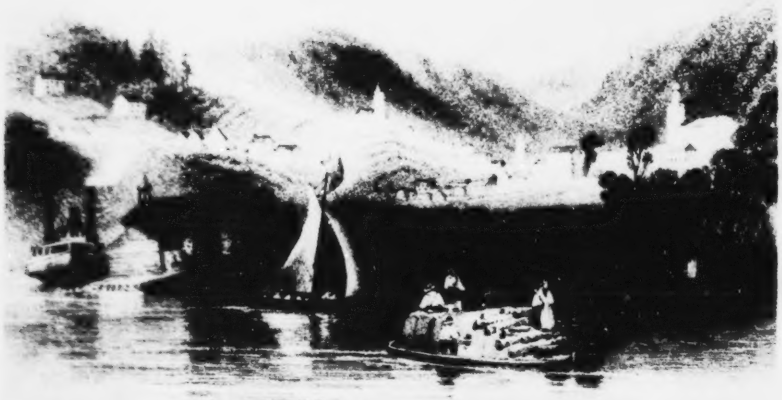

Fig. 3.1 Port Hope c. 1840.

To a considerable extent, the progress of Canada is written in the founding and growth of her cities.

Canadian Magazine (1903)

Early Settlement: 1790-1820

The province of Upper Canada, which would later become Ontario, was created in 1791 with John Graves Simcoe appointed by the British Crown as its governor. The first settlement followed the surveying in 1783 of 10 townships, including Kingston, Ernestown (Bath) and Richmond. It was only after 1791 that settlement began to increase significantly in other parts of the province.[1]

The lands that the government had purchased from the Indians were granted free to settlers, along with free rations, farming implements, seeds, clothes and other commodities. Most of the early settlers were United Empire Loyalists whose political convictions brought them north from the United States

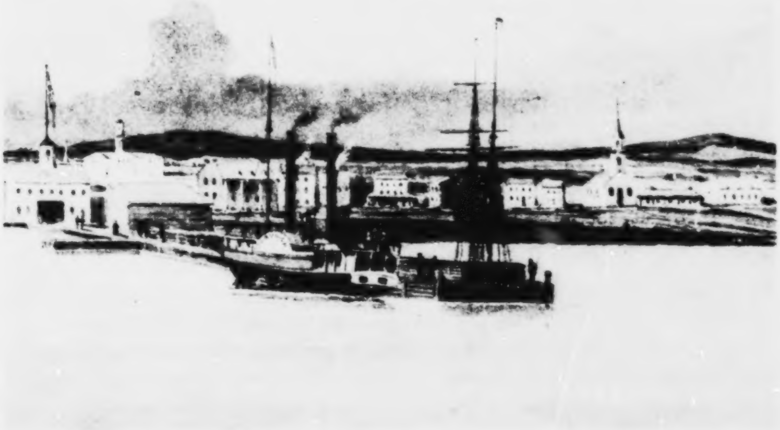

Fig. 3.2 Cobourg c. 1840.

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at the end of the American Revolution. While the majority settled in the Maritimes, many made their homes in Upper Canada.

Since water was still the primary means of transportation, settlements grew up close to it. The earliest colonial settlements were along the upper St. Lawrence, and along Lake Ontario from east of Kingston to Niagara-on-the-Lake. Elsewhere in the province in this period there were only scattered Indian villages and a few traders' outposts.

Settlement Policies

The earliest form of land subdivision in Ontario was the legal grid square. Concessions varied in overall size, form, and in shape, being either rectangular or square. The Crown dispensed land under agricultural settlement agreements that permitted a fairly equitable distribution of property to a wide range of people. As a result, the class-dominated ownership practices of Europe were not established in the new towns of Ontario.

The system was not without elitism, however. English class values were perpetuated to some extent through such practices as giving special grants to influential persons and to persons who could take advantage of flaws in the settlement regulations. For example, land was granted to Loyalists on a scale that allotted 50 acres to a private soldier and 5,000 acres to a field officer. Since the children of a family were eligible for grants as well as their parents, a large family could amass a very large tract of land. Some land was in turn sold to speculators, which further undercut the egalitarian intent of the original settlement policy. In addition, one-seventh of each township was set aside for clergy reserves, to strengthen the Anglican Church, and another one-seventh was retained by the Crown as a reserve to cover government expenses.[2]

In 1826, recognizing that the free land grant system had been greatly abused, the government changed the policy from granting land to selling it to prospective settlers at public auction. (The military and Loyalists still retained the right to secure free land grants, however.) Purchase of land for settlement included the obligation to build roads and bridges fronting one's property.[3]

Kingston, although only a hamlet, was the only important urban settlement in Upper Canada in 1791. Established in 1783 as Fort Cataraqui, its origins were linked to the need for a garrison on the St. Lawrence River as a defence against the Americans. York (renamed Toronto in 1834) was established as a garrison in 1793, and was made the seat of government of Upper Canada in 1797 because it was a safer distance from the American border than Niagara and offered the best harbour on Lake Ontario.

By 1788, five years after a garrison was established at Kingston, a 300-acre common was located on Point Henry, across the harbour from the town site. In the early 1800s a wall was built to enclose the town, and on the military lands west of town a horse racing track was located on land that would later become City Park. By 1816, Kingston had a population of 2,250 and about 300 buildings, as well as a public marketplace and a church plaza, while the water frontage was reserved for fortification on land that many years later (1967) was to become Confederation Park.[4]

Early Planning

One of the early attempts at planning communities was made by the government of Upper Canada in the 1790s. The lakeshore district around Kingston was planned for a series of townships with a town in each, laid out to a prescribed plan. "The plan consisted of town lots of one acre, town parks of

24 acres, and squares and streets of stated dimensions."[5] However, despite this grandiose government scheme to encourage settlement, few of the sites materialized, and the idea of a town site for each township was abandoned in 1794.

It had been the practice to give settlers a town lot and a country or "park" lot, as early as the settlement in Lunenberg, Nova Scotia. This practice was followed in the early settlement days of Toronto and in Peterborough by Peter Robinson, who gave key settlers a town lot and a "park" lot. In other words, the idea of an "estate" or a hunting "park" was a well established precedent in the settlement practices of English Canada.

By contrast with Kingston, Hamilton was not established as a military base but developed as a commercial city, with upstart entrepreneurial forces exemplified by personalities such as Allan McNab and his Dundurn Castle as early as 1835.[6] London could be described in a similar way. As another contrast, John Galt established towns such as Guelph, Goderich and Galt with land policies to encourage settlement.

Population

By 1820, the total population of southern Ontario was estimated at 40,000 persons, of which over one-half lived in the Quinte or eastern district of the region. In the 10 years between 1828 and 1838 the population of Upper Canada increased more than two-fold, as is shown in table 1.

The Growth of Towns

By 1820, there were only two important urban centres in Upper Canada, Kingston with 2,300 population and York with 1,250, and only a few villages in between. Kingston, which was established as a garrison, was soon recognized as a trade and transportation centre, and the first banks in Upper Canada were established there. The surrounding countryside was the

Table 1
Population of Upper Canada by District 1828-1838

District	1828	1838
Ottawa	3,732	8,016
Bathurst	14,516	23,436
Eastern	19,159	29,498
Johnstown	18,244	31,976
Midland	30,960	37,382
Prince Edward	—	13,212
Newcastle	13,335	35,755
Home	22,927	57,314
Niagara	20,177	
Gore	15,149	50,319
London	19,813	
Western	8,333	
TOTAL	186,345	388,029
Toronto (York)	2,235	12,571

Source: Public Archives of Ontario, Appendix, Journal of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada.

The districts listed in table 1 are shown on fig. 3.4.

best developed in the province and, with no competition from the hamlets in the region, Kingston became the centre of an active trading of goods from the British to the American settlements on Lake Ontario.

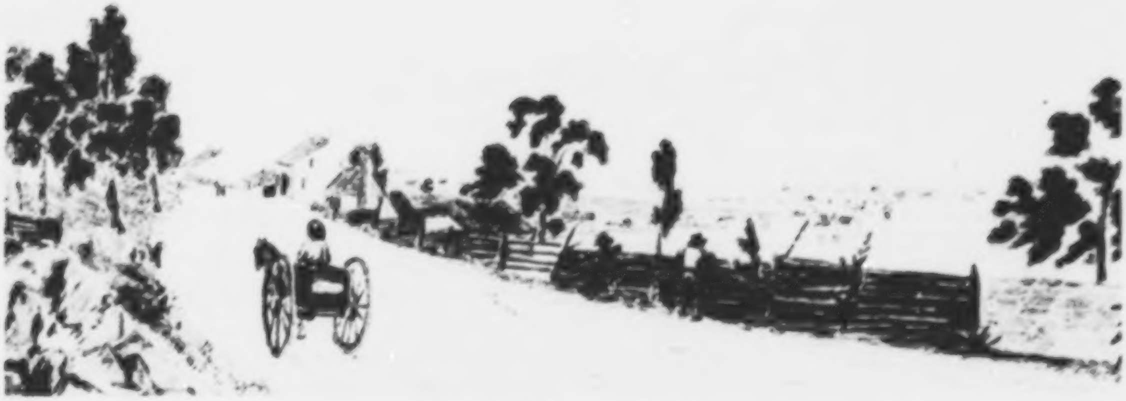

Fig. 3.3 Kingston c. 1820

Until the opening of the Kingston Road in 1800, York was considered isolated and it did not share in the heavy trading to the United States through Kingston, although both centres acted as stimulants to their hinterlands. The first stage services from York north to Holland Landing began in 1828, 11 years after such service was provided between York and Kingston. The fact that York was the capital of Upper Canada attracted wealth to the young town, and the construction of well-built brick public buildings enhanced its appearance. Immigrants were encouraged to settle in or adjacent to the townsite. Residents included government officials and their families, large landowners, owners of banks and large businesses and retired army officers, along with the ever-increasing skilled trades people and small businessmen. Although they bore little physical resemblance to the cities in the Old World the settlers had left, the towns of Upper Canada had two Old World characteristics: they were dominated by the middle class and commerce was central to their existence.

While they were a stronghold of the middle class, however, the towns were rather primitive as to architecture and civic pride. By 1820, there were virtually no settlements beyond the hamlet stage in Upper Canada other than York and Kingston. And the appearance of these towns, according to descriptions given in 1825, was rather depressing. York had "streets. . . regularly laid out, intersecting each other at right angles. Only one of them, however, is completely built; and in wet weather the unfinished streets are if possible muddier and dirtier than those of Kingston. The situation of the town is very unhealthy, for it stands on a piece of low marsh."[7] Kingston for its part is reported to have had buildings "of such an inferior description as scarcely to be worthy of notice."[8]

Isolation due to low-density settlement patterns, inadequate transportation, and the cost of imported manufactured goods were the major problems to be overcome. "Such constraints affected the economic, social and cultural development of Upper Canada, and therefore also urban growth."[9]

Immigration 1820-1850

The period between 1820 and 1850 saw a large immigration of settlers into Upper Canada from the British Isles, especially from Ireland, with passage to the New World easy to secure on timber ships returning for cargo. Despite the fact that about 60 per cent of the immigrants landing at Quebec crossed over to the United States, which was more prosperous and offered cheaper land, the population of Upper Canada saw a substantial increase. By 1841 it had reached nearly half a million with the vast majority of the population living relatively close to the U.S. border, as shown on fig. 3.4, Upper Canada in 1841. In 1851, when the first census was published, 952,004 persons lived in Upper Canada (table 2).

Table 2
Population of Upper and Lower Canada 1851

Upper Canada	952,004
Lower Canada	890,261
TOTAL:	1,842,265

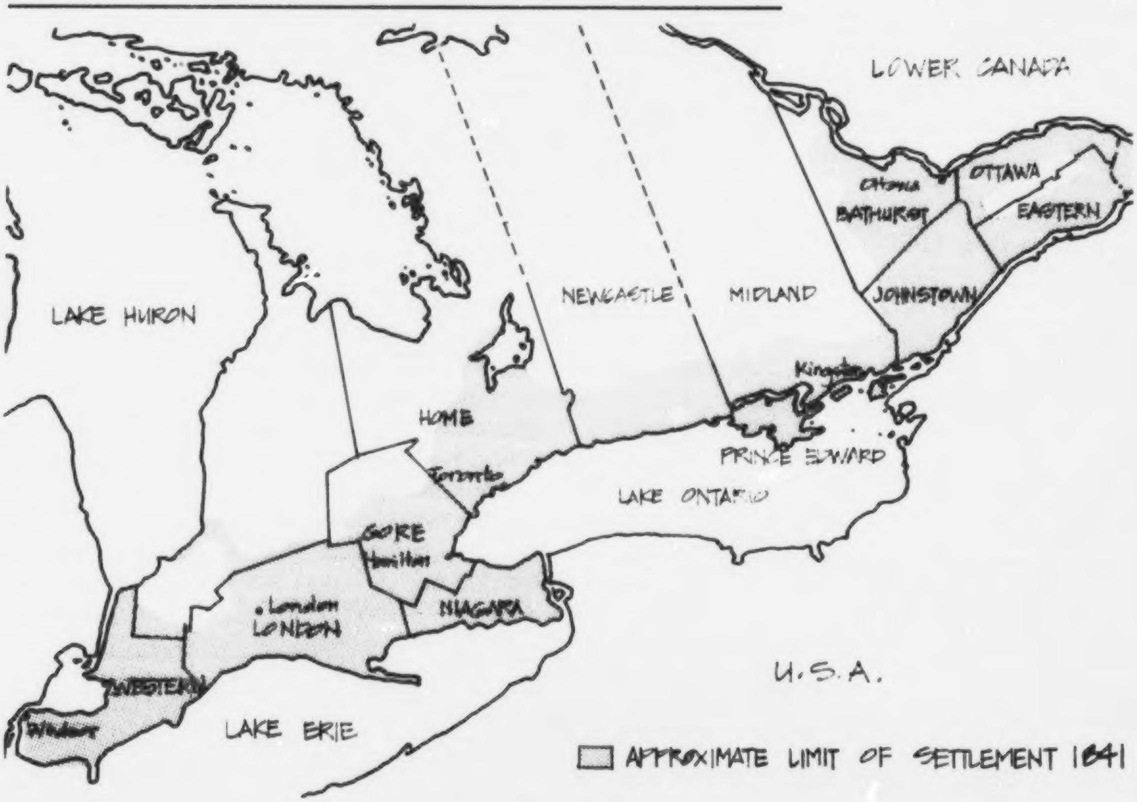
LOWER CANADA
Ottawa
OTTAWA
BATHURST
EASTERN
LAKE HURON
NEWCASTLE
MIDLAND
JOHNSTOWN
Kingston
HOME
PRINCE EDWARD
Toronto
LAKE ONTARIO
GORE
Hamilton
London
LONDON
NIAGARA
U.S.A.
WESTERN
Windsor
LAKE ERIE
☐ APPROXIMATE LIMIT OF SETTLEMENT 1841

Fig. 3.4 Upper Canada 1841 — showing extent of settlement.

According to the 1851 census, 16 per cent of Ontario's population lived in incorporated centres, and 84 per cent were rural. While Halton, Lennox and Addington, Dufferin, Peel and Victoria counties still had no incorporated town or villages,

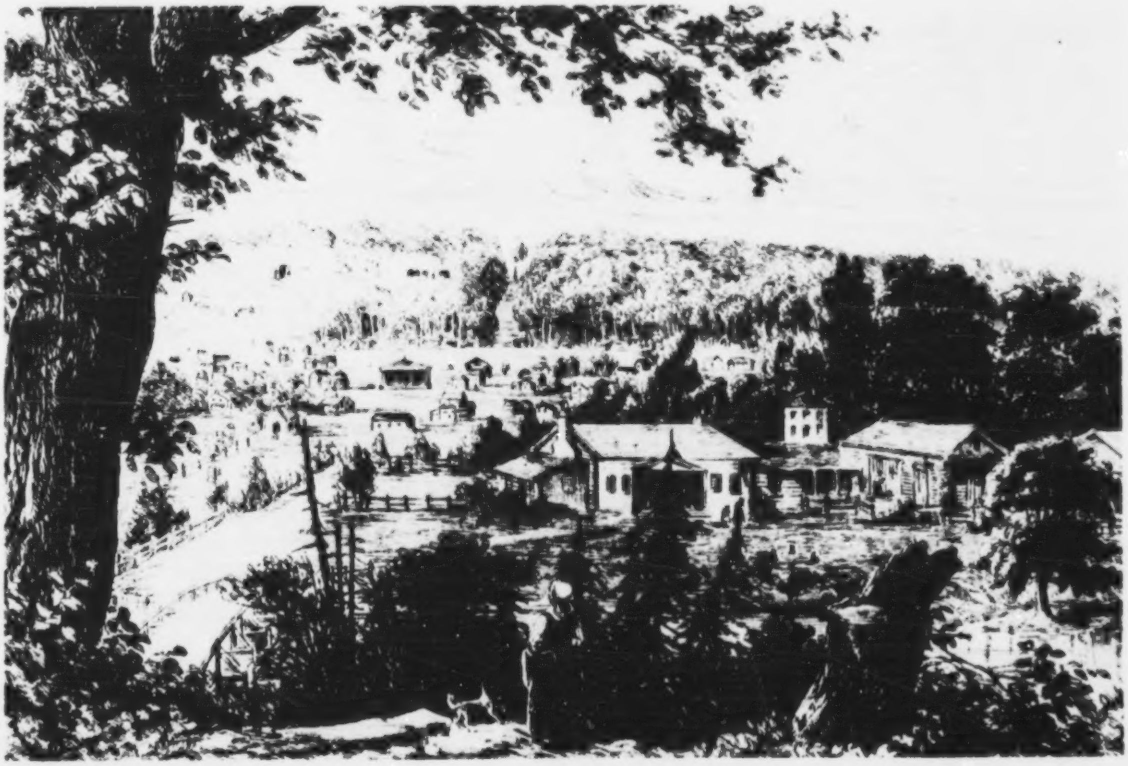

Fig. 3.5 Guelph 1831.

York County, which included Toronto, was more than 61 per cent urban. Toronto was growing rapidly, reaching 30,000 persons by 1851. By the same year, Kingston had reached 11,000 persons and Hamilton 14,000 (table 3).[10]

Table 3
Population of Selected Cities
Canada, 1851

Saint John, New Brunswick	22,745
Montreal	57,715
Quebec City	42,052
Toronto	30,775
Hamilton	14,112
Kingston	11,585
Ottawa	7,760
London	7,035

Source: Statistics Canada

There were only 24 centres of more than 500 persons in 1851, 17 of these on or adjacent to Lake Ontario. The population of Upper Canada had grown especially rapidly since 1835, "when profound changes began to develop in transportation, agriculture, manufacturing and trade."[11] Easier access to U.S. markets had altered the scale of trade and finance, with an increasing flow of capital to the cities. It was in this setting that the first public parks were established in Upper Canada.

Recreation 1800-1860

Recreation in Upper Canada ranged from fishing and hunting, to horse racing, and to spectacles as macabre as public hangings. Cricket and curling became popular by the second quarter of the nineteenth century. For those with some education and at least moderate means, social activities included "assemblies," evening gatherings offering dancing, conversation and whist. Plays and theatre were available in the larger towns, often performed by professional touring companies.[12]

This period saw the beginnings of local musical societies and concerts as well, and by 1850 fraternities and clubs had become extremely popular. Carriage drives and family picnics were another pastime. Most of these forms of recreation, however, were limited to the larger towns, and to people with moderate or higher incomes. For most, with business being labour intensive, the work week was six days long, and it left little time or energy for recreation.[13]

Fig. 3.6 Lower Bytown (Ottawa) 1841.

The Baldwin Act was passed in May, 1849, "to provide. . . for the erection of Municipal Corporations." Although it does not refer directly to the development of public parks or other space for recreation, the Act reveals the values of the period and the degree of concern given to moral issues. It states that the municipality of each village shall have the power and authority to make bylaws for a range of public purposes such as houses, roads, water, etc., and "for enforcing the due observance of the Sabbath; for preventing vice, drunkenness, profane swearing, obscene language, and any other species of immorality and indecency in the streets or other public places."[14]

But the years between 1820 and 1850 "were still the era of rough roads, horse and saddle, weekly papers, factional politics, and above all, of the town as the backbone of the Upper Canadian way of life."[15] Upper Canada was predominately Protestant, "with a strong strain of puritanism," with most homes having a Bible and a portrait of Queen Victoria, "in the sense of loyalty and devotion to the young monarch. . . that had all the fervour of a faith."[16] Activities such as "card playing, dancing, reading of novels, and even ice skating were widely denounced as dangerous, if not sinful pastimes,"[17] with the Bible being the most popular literature of the day.

One begins to discern the attitudes that would soon be used to justify the creation of public parks for the moral improvement of the population.

NOTES

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1. Jacob Spelt, **Urban Development in South-Central Ontario**, McClelland and Stewart Ltd., Toronto, 1972, p. 18.
2. Ibid., p. 35.
3. Ibid., p. 56.
4. Archives, Queens University, City of Kingston Records, 1816.
5. Spelt, p. 21.
6. Michael B. Katz, **The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth Century City**, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1975, p. 5.
7. Spelt, p. 53.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p. 39.
10. Ibid., p. 89.
11. Ibid., p. 93.
12. G.P. de T. Glazebrook, **Life in Ontario, A Social History**, University of Toronto Press, 1968, p. 60.
13. Ibid., pp. 60-61.
14. An Act to provide. . . for the erection of Municipal Corporations, and the establishment of Counties, Cities, Towns, Townships and Villages in Upper Canada, 30 May, 1849, pp. 477-8.
15. John S. Moir, "The Upper Canadian Religious Tradition" in **Profiles of Province**, Ontario Historical Society, 1967, p. 189.
16. Ibid., p. 191.
17. Ibid.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SPACES IN THE EARLY SETTLEMENTS

The major types of public open spaces characteristic of Upper Canadian villages and towns in the early 1800s were the common, the public square, the military parade ground or square, the church plaza and the cemetery. A brief description of each of these types of open space follows.

The Common

Common land set aside as public communal pasture for livestock, as a source of wood for fuel, and for air and exercise, originated with the Saxons in medieval England.[1] The practice was introduced by English settlers in the New World as, for example, with Boston Common, on which cattle were grazed, and which remains today a public park with its original boundaries. Commons can be found in many of the villages of the eastern seaboard founded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A similar pattern emerged in the early Canadian settlements. One of the earliest examples was the Halifax Common, established in 1750 to serve the residents of the newly founded defence outpost of the British sector of the Maritimes. The common was an integral part of most of the hamlets and villages of early Upper Canada and indeed remained a functional land use in many Ontario towns, including Guelph, as late as the early 1900s. Although in Canadian towns the common served as a ceremonial and festive centre for special occasions, it was not regularly used for recreation as we understand it.

The Public Square

The public square, which had its beginning in the Greek agora and developed through the centuries in the towns and cities of Europe, was incorporated into the towns and fortified villages of St. Croix and Port Royal in the 1600s. A map of the original townsite of Quebec City shows an open square in front of the church which also served as a market square. The upper town also had two large squares relating to key buildings. A public square was included in the early grid pattern of

The measure of a city's worth — in terms of its respect for the needs of its people — ought to be gauged by the quality of public space it manages to provide.

J.S. French

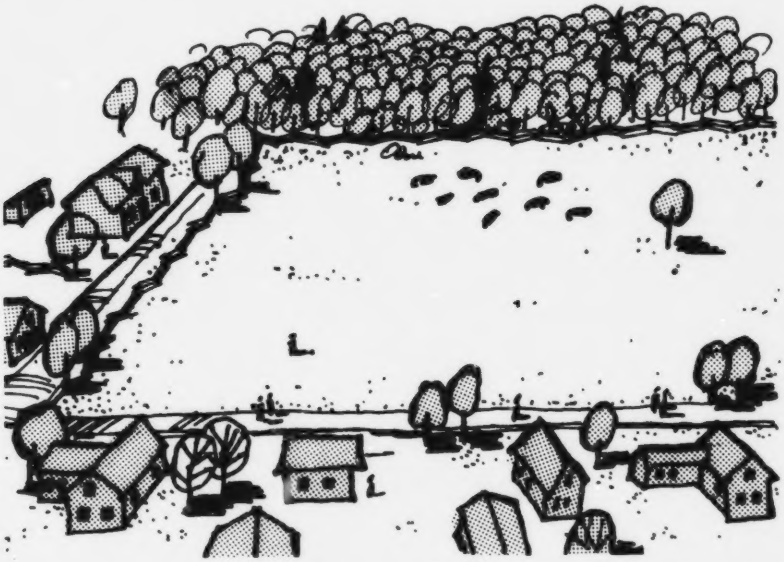

Fig. 4.1 The common, as found in many early Canadian settlements.

Montreal in 1821, initiated by Lord Dalhousie as a counterpart to the squares of London, England.[2] King and Queen's Square in Saint John, New Brunswick, which were included in the original town charter of 1785, were set aside as public space in 1840. Similar squares were established in Toronto in the early 1800s, and there were at least four such public squares by 1840.

The square was virtually a trademark of the military townsite. Cornwall, which was laid out as a military garrison, had a square in the traditional pattern which doubled as the market square, as did Morrisburg. The Upper Canada villages of Guelph (1827) and Goderich (1829), established by John

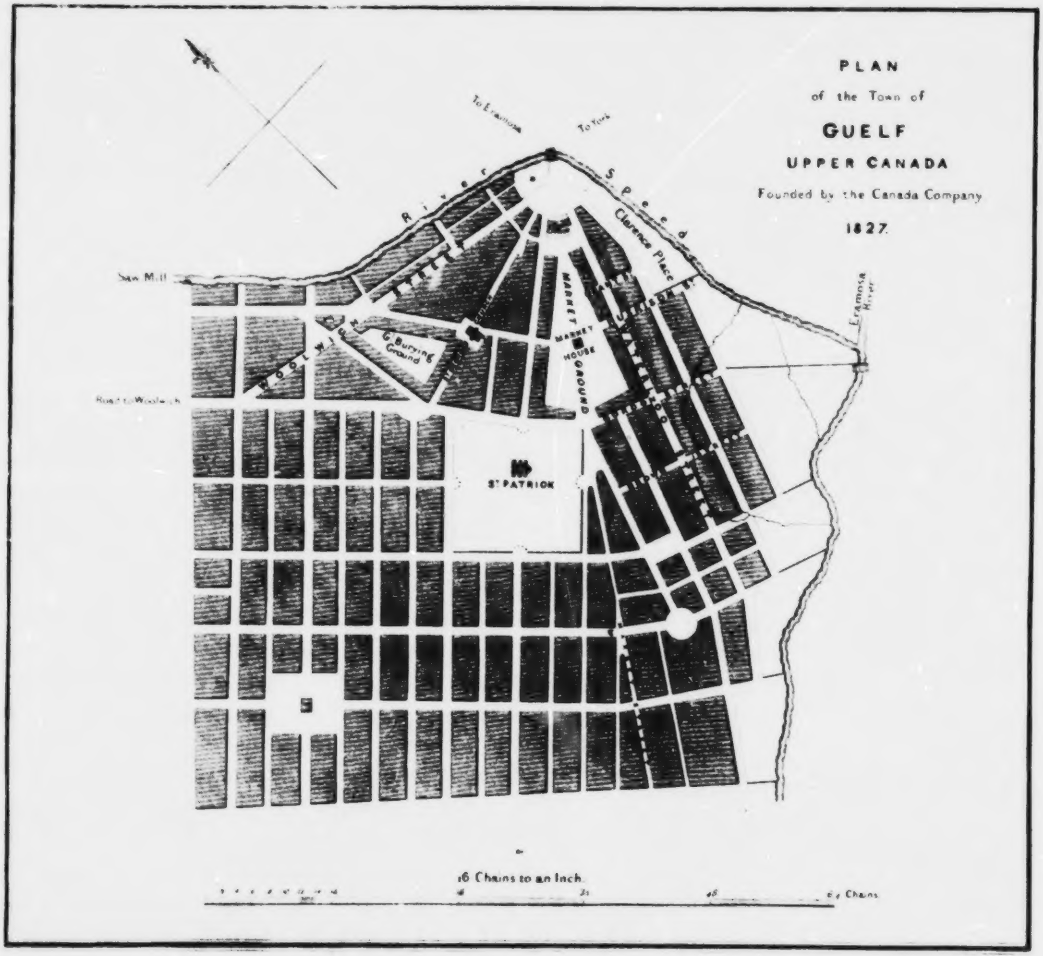
PLAN
of the Town of
GUELF
UPPER CANADA
Founded by the Canada Company
1827
To Eramosa
To York
River Speed
Clarence Place
Saw Mill
Road to Woolwich
WOOLWICH
G. Burying Ground
MARKET
MARKET HOUSE
GROUND
ST PATRICK
Eramosa River
S
16 Chains to an Inch
64 Chains

Fig. 4.2 Guelf (now Guelph) — 1827, showing market ground.

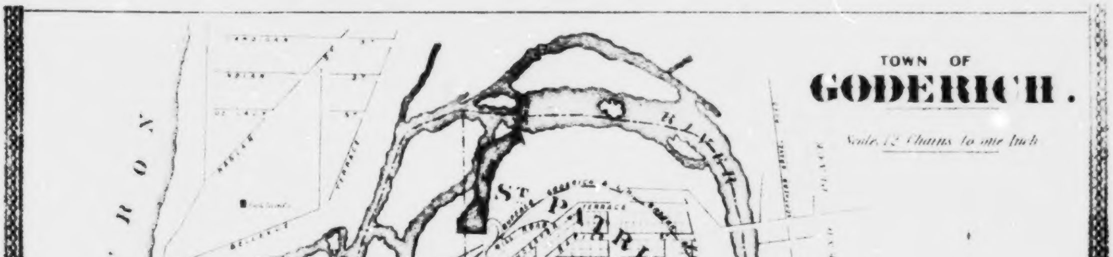
TOWN OF
GODERICH.
Scale 12 Chains to one Inch
LAKE
HURON
RIVER
MAITLAND
HARBOUR
ST PATRICK'S WARD
ST GEORGE'S WARD
ST ANDREW'S WARD
ST DAVID'S WARD

Fig. 4.3 Goderich — showing radial plan.

Galt, were based on a radial plan, with a public square or marketplace occupying a main part of the central core.[3] The land adjacent to the impressive Kingston City Hall, built as the proposed seat of government for Upper Canada, served and still serves as the market square for the town. Similar squares can still be identified in Pembroke, Brockville, Hamilton, Guelph and Peterborough, among others.

Early residential squares were set aside for the more affluent residents living adjacent to them, as was the custom in Britain. In this sense, they could scarcely be considered "public" although they do represent the acceptance of the idea of provision of public green space and an aesthetic character within the city's neighbourhoods. Their function was simply to provide open space, with pathways for strolling. (An 1865 bylaw in Montreal stated that any games, and walking or lying on the grass itself, were prohibited.[4])

Church Plaza

An open space or plaza in front of the churches of the early settlements was used for religious ceremonies and other public gatherings, and often doubled as the market square. The original plans for Louisburg, Quebec City and most of the towns in Quebec show such plazas.[5] Church plazas were part of the early settlements in Upper Canada as well, in hamlets and towns along the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario.

Military Lands

The early fortresses and defence posts included a square or parade ground adjacent to the barracks. Such spaces sometimes also served as public space for political meetings or other assemblies. Military lands were later to play an important role, as many of Ontario's public parks were established on former military lands. This was true of Niagara-on-the-Lake, City Park in Kingston and Victoria Park in London. Other well-known park sites in Canada that were originally military holdings include Point Pleasant Park in Halifax, St. Helen's Island in Montreal, and Exhibition Park in Toronto.

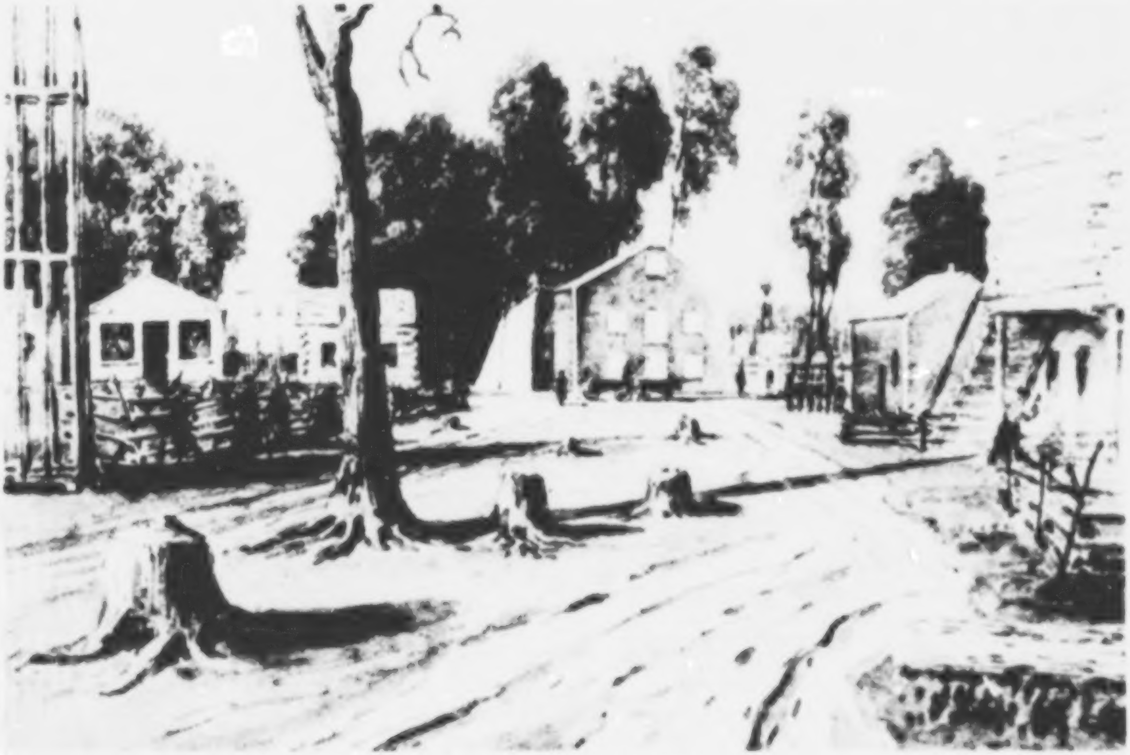

Fig. 4.4 Chatham c. 1838

Cemeteries

The cemetery was important as a forerunner to the public park. In recent years it has been interesting to see statements made by various recreation leaders on the potential use of cemeteries for public recreation. The comments usually imply that this possibility had never been considered before. In fact, cemeteries near urban areas were used widely for recreation in

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the latter part of the nineteenth century.

With few exceptions, these lands were located at the edge of the emerging towns in the early settlement days. In 1833, a portion of the Halifax Common was set aside as a burial ground.

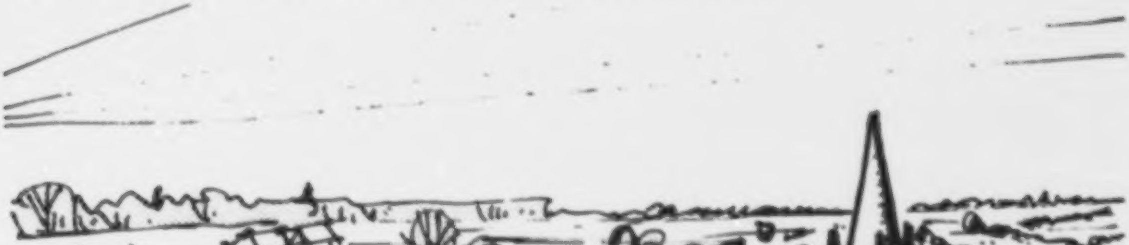

Fig. 4.5 A church plaza c. 1830 in early Ontario village.

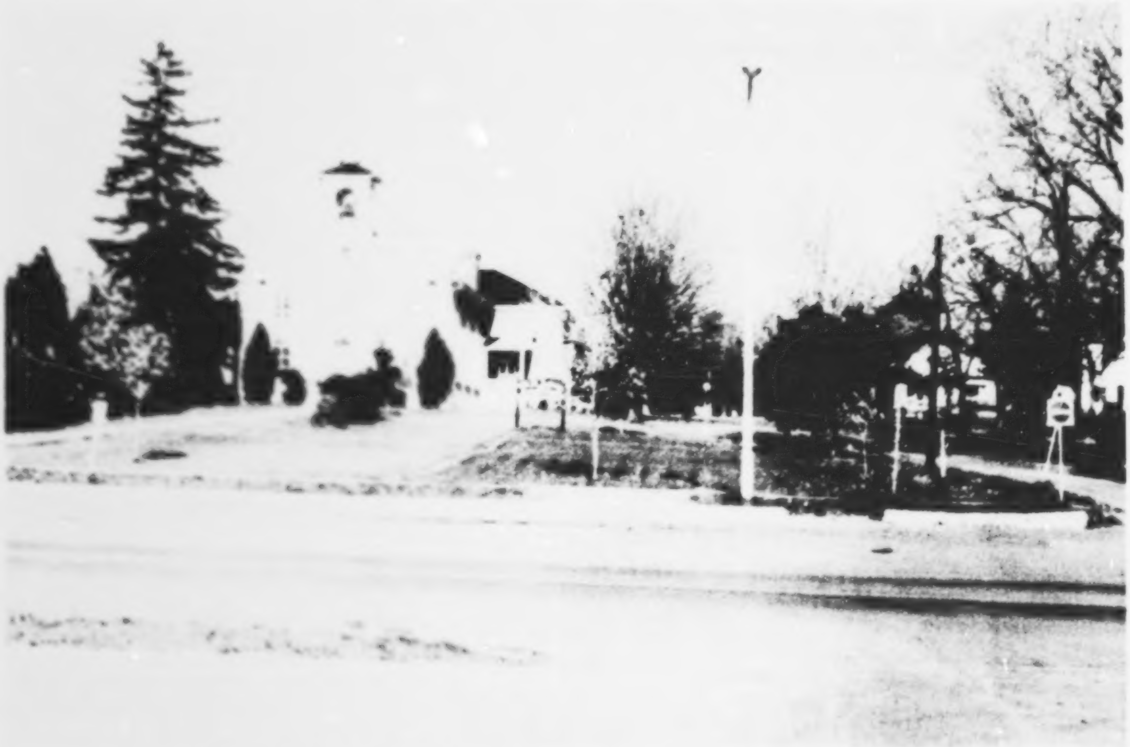

Fig. 4.6 Colborne Presbyterian Church plaza today (built 1830).

A cemetery was also located adjacent to King Square in Saint John, New Brunswick. The Toronto General Burying Grounds including the Prospect and Necropolis cemeteries were established in 1826 and St. James Cemetery was founded in 1840.[6] These cemeteries were used for walking, pleasure outings and picnics, particularly on Sundays. In the 1860s, the Toronto **Globe** frequently mentions the local cemeteries

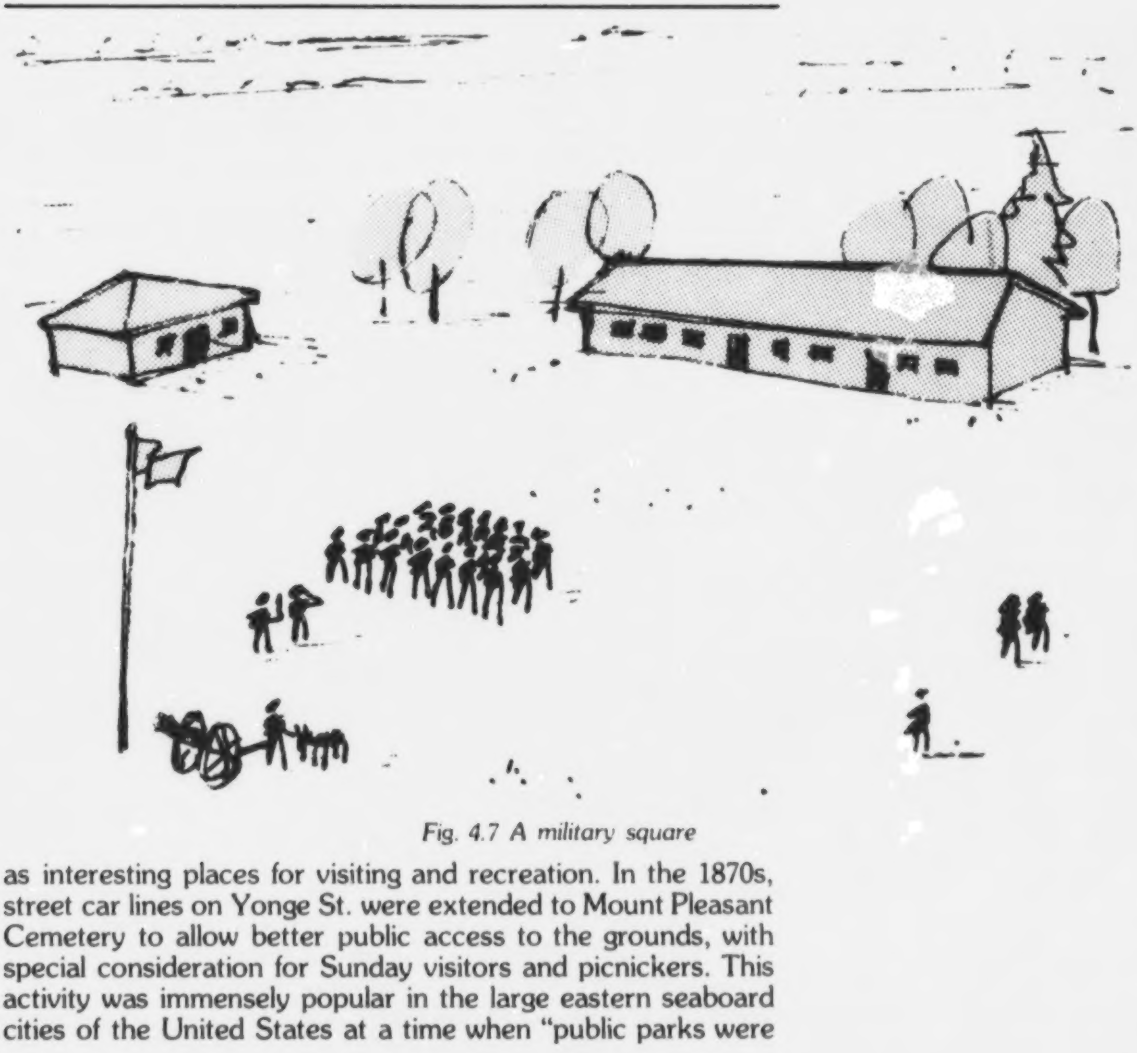

Fig. 4.7 A military square

as interesting places for visiting and recreation. In the 1870s, street car lines on Yonge St. were extended to Mount Pleasant Cemetery to allow better public access to the grounds, with special consideration for Sunday visitors and picnickers. This activity was immensely popular in the large eastern seaboard cities of the United States at a time when "public parks were

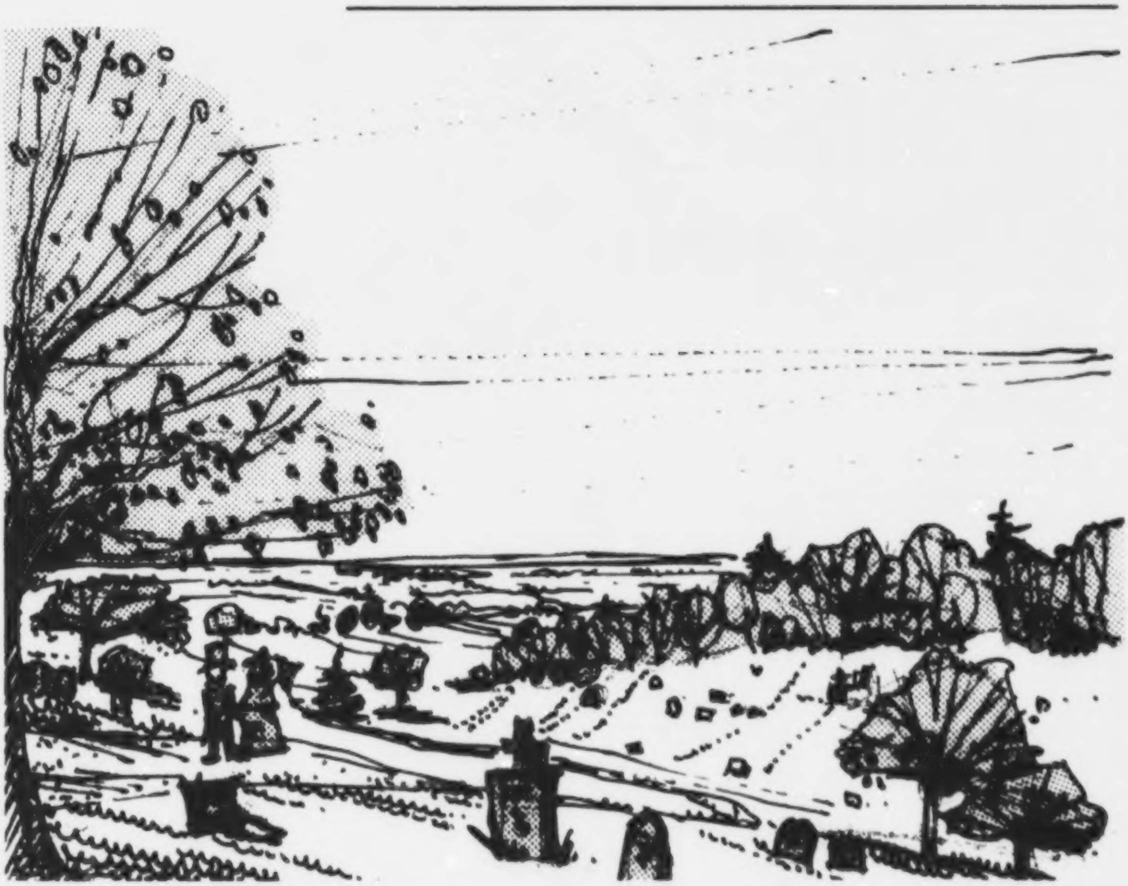

Fig. 4.8 An early rural cemetery ground.

virtually unknown in America."[7] In fact, proponents of public parks in this early period used the interest shown in cemeteries as an argument for public gardens and parks.

NOTES

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1. Susan Markham, **The Halifax Common 1749 to 1979**, unpublished M.A. thesis, Dalhousie University, Halifax, 1980, p. 7.
2. Elsi[illegible] M. McFarland, **Development of Public Recreation in Canada**, Canadian Parks/Recreation Association, Toronto, 1978, p. 8.
3. John N. Jackson, **The Canadian City**, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., Toronto, 1973, p. 29.
4. McFarland, p. 8.
5. Jackson, p. 23.
6. Edith G. Firth, **The Town of York 1815-1834**, University of Toronto Press, 1966, p. 311.
7. Michael Laurie, **An Introduction to Landscape Architecture**, American Elsevier Publishing Co., New York, 1975, p. 65.

5. EARLY PARKS IN THE UNITED STATES

As in Canada, the early settlers to the United States of America carried with them their memories of the older British and European cities, and as a result virtually every new settlement plan included a public open space or square, used for communal grazing of cattle (the common); drilling of militia and public gatherings (the parade square, often landscaped in a formal manner, and often known as "the green" in New England towns); aesthetic purposes; or as a market area, but this use was much less common than in Europe.

The greens of New England towns were often open-ended, seldom geometrically square, and they were often adapted to the natural site in much the same way the agora in Greece was flexible in shape and multi-purpose in function. The green served as "residential square, marketplace, government square, meeting place and parade ground — all in one."[1] Boston Common (1640) is an excellent example of this type of open space.

Plans of the early colonial settlements, such as the well-known plan for Savannah, Georgia, drawn in 1733, were in traditional gridiron pattern where "the square by frequent repetition becomes an integral part of the street pattern."[2] Philadelphia's original plan, laid out by William Penn in 1682, "located five squares in a broad formal grid pattern."[3] These squares were not often recognized for their potential value as a frontspiece for public or other important buildings. Rather, they provided a sense of place in the residential street pattern. Most of these early squares, however, were provided for the well-to-do residents of adjacent streets, as were the early urban squares in London, and therefore they were not truly public in the broader sense.

The recreational function of cemeteries has not been generally recognized. Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia, Every American who visits London. . . feels mortified that no city in the United States has a public **park**. . . What are called parks in New York are not even apologies for the thing: they are only squares or paddocks.

Andrew Jackson Downing (1850)

Mt. Auburn in Cambridge and Greenwood in New York all existed in 1830. They were very popular for Sunday outings with the inhabitants of large cities, and guidebooks even suggested routes to view particularly impressive monuments and viewpoints.[4]

Mt. Auburn Cemetery is considered the forerunner of the great park movement of the U.S., a movement that gained momentum in 1852 with the planning of the mall in Washington by Andrew Jackson Downing, and the planning of Bushnell Park in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1853.[5]

Revolutionary changes in methods of transportation, agriculture, and manufacturing in the nineteenth century — the Industrial Revolution — resulted in the rapid growth and development of urban centres in the United States. This growth in turn had repercussions on the shape and structure of the cities, as well as on the lives of the many people who moved to them to find employment.

The first half of the nineteenth century was characterized particularly by new technical inventions which increased production, both in factories and on farms. As well, markets developed, due to the expansion of credit, the establishment of fairs, and the formation of chartered companies. The resulting rapid growth could not accommodate the many people, particularly immigrants, who moved to the cities. Overcrowding, congestion, disease, and filth were the common results of industrialization in American cities. Rising capitalism ignored the historic roots of cities and the geography of the land. Industries, residential areas and businesses were often built with neither order nor consideration for living conditions. There were few open spaces or recreation areas, and few public services, except in the wealthier neighbourhoods.

Although not all American cities were hit by rapid industrialization to the same degree as Boston and New York, for example, they showed some common characteristics, among them: muddy, garbage-littered streets, animals such as pigs allowed to roam the streets, and disease due to poor living conditions, especially in the mid-period of the nineteenth century.

While a number of American cities were much larger than Montreal or Toronto by this time, there is no evidence of a move to establish public parks dedicated to the recreational needs of the citizens until around 1850, although there was growing concern about urban congestion and the need for fresh air and sunshine for health reasons. There was also, as in Britain, a strong moral argument, as voiced by a prominent citizen, Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852). Downing became the leading spokesman for those concerned with landscape gardening and civic improvement. In partnership with Calvert Vaux, a leading architect of the day, Downing was selected to landscape the Washington mall in 1851, in recognition of his prestige and ability. He was also a gifted writer and his book **Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening** was considered a classic, influencing landscaping in both the United States and Europe.[6]

In 1848, he expressed concern over the lack of public parks, and argued "the general interest shown in the cemeteries proved that public gardens established in a liberal and similar manner near our cities would be successful."[7]

Another leader in the struggle to establish a central park for New Yorkers was William Cullen Bryant, the respected editor of the New York **Evening Post**. Bryant began advocating a large public park through his paper in 1844, at least four years before Downing's views were publicly stated. To Bryant credit must be given as the first proponent of Central Park.[8]

The third outstanding personality in the Central Park battle was Frederick Law Olmsted, who eventually designed the park and served as its first superintendent. Olmsted, now known as the father of landscape architecture, contributed significantly to park development in both the U.S. and Canada. Part II of this series provides a more detailed story on Olmsted's contributions.

A major deterrent in the establishment of open space as a public recreational space was the pervasive view that a public park would lead to serious conflict between the gentry and the working classes, as is shown by the following editorial comment taken from the New York **Herald** in 1858.

> *It is all folly to expect in this country to have parks like those in old aristocratic countries. When we open a public park Sam will air himself in it. He will take his friends whether from Church Street, or elsewhere. He will knock down any better dressed man who remonstrates with him. He will talk and sing and fill his share of the bench, and flirt with nursery maids in his own coarse way. Now we ask what chance have William B. Astor and Edward Everett against this fellow citizen of theirs? Can they and he enjoy the same place? Is it not obvious that he will turn them out, and that the great Central Park will be nothing but a great bear-garden for the lowest denizens of the city, which we shall yet pray litanies to be delivered?*[9]

It was further queried whether a "gentleman" would ever visit Central Park, or for a moment consider permitting his wife and daughters to visit it.

General acceptance of the public park idea in the United States ran parallel to such acceptance and development in

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Canada. However, the public park as a concept was generally accepted earlier in Canada than in many American cities. It seems the British influence continued to play a stronger role in the Canadian colony than in the independent United States of America, despite the much greater population of the States and its much larger and more congested cities. However, America was not blessed with the great urban open spaces of European nobility nor the grand rural estates of the landed gentry. "American cities are, by comparison, park poor since few such large, centrally located private estates ever existed."[10]

NOTES

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1. Paul Zucker, **Town and Square**, Columbia University Press, New York, 1959, p. 238.
2. Ibid., p. 242.
3. Ibid.
4. Norman T. Newton, **Design on the Land,** Belknap Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971, p. 268.
5. Michael Hugo-Brunt, **The History of City Planning**, Harvest House, Montreal, 1972, p. 184.
6. George F. Chadwick, **The Park and the Town**, Architectural Press, London, England, 1966, p. 163.
7. R.J. Favretti and J.P. Favretti, **Landscape Gardens for Historic Buildings**, American Association for State and Local History, Nashville, Kentucky, 1978, p. 84.
8. F.L. Olmsted Jr. and T. Kimball, **Forty Years of Landscape Architecture: Central Park**, p. 22.
9. Ibid., p. 169.
10. Jere Stuart French, **Urban Green**, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, Dubuque, Iowa, 1973, p. 7.

6. ONTARIO'S FIRST PUBLIC PARKS

The earliest "public" garden in Canada is linked to the settlement of St. John's, Newfoundland, the first overseas colonial government of Britain. A small tract of land called The Garden at the west end of the harbour was used as a public space by 1583. It was full of wild roses, strawberries and other fruits, and could be reached by a path that is now Water Street. This garden would be considered an overgrown vacant lot by today's standards, but in the early settlement days such a public open space was unique.[1] Later settlements in the Atlantic provinces boasted their own commons and gardens. The Halifax Common was dedicated to the town's trustees by Provincial Act in 1763.[2] French Canadian villages of the same period usually had a market square and always a church plaza, although these were clearly more utilitarian than recreational.[3]

In 1837, the Nova Scotia Horticultural Society obtained land from the City of Halifax on Spring Garden Road and established a "garden" for the production, sale and viewing of plant materials. While the Society hoped to established a "public" garden, "the public-at-large could come in free only one day each week,"[4] since the Society were a group of private shareholders and subscribers who were permitted free admission to the grounds. It was not until 1861 that the site was opened to the public with no charge and renamed the Public Gardens. The Garden was eventually sold to the city in 1874 because of financial difficulties, and maintained as a public park.[5]

There are several contenders for the distinction of Ontario's first public park, devoted specifically to recreation, among them Niagara-on-the-Lake, Toronto, Kingston and Hamilton. Establishing the place and time of the first public park may not in itself be of great significance, but it

Parks are better preachers of temperance than any temperance societies, better refiners of national manners than any dancing schools, and better promoters of general good feeling than any lectures on the philosophy of happiness ever delivered in the lecture room.

Andrew Jackson Downing (1850)

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does provide a benchmark in the evolution of public open space from utilitarian purposes to social benefits, and reveals the shift in values towards a concern for the health and well-being of the general public and the needs of all citizens of the community.

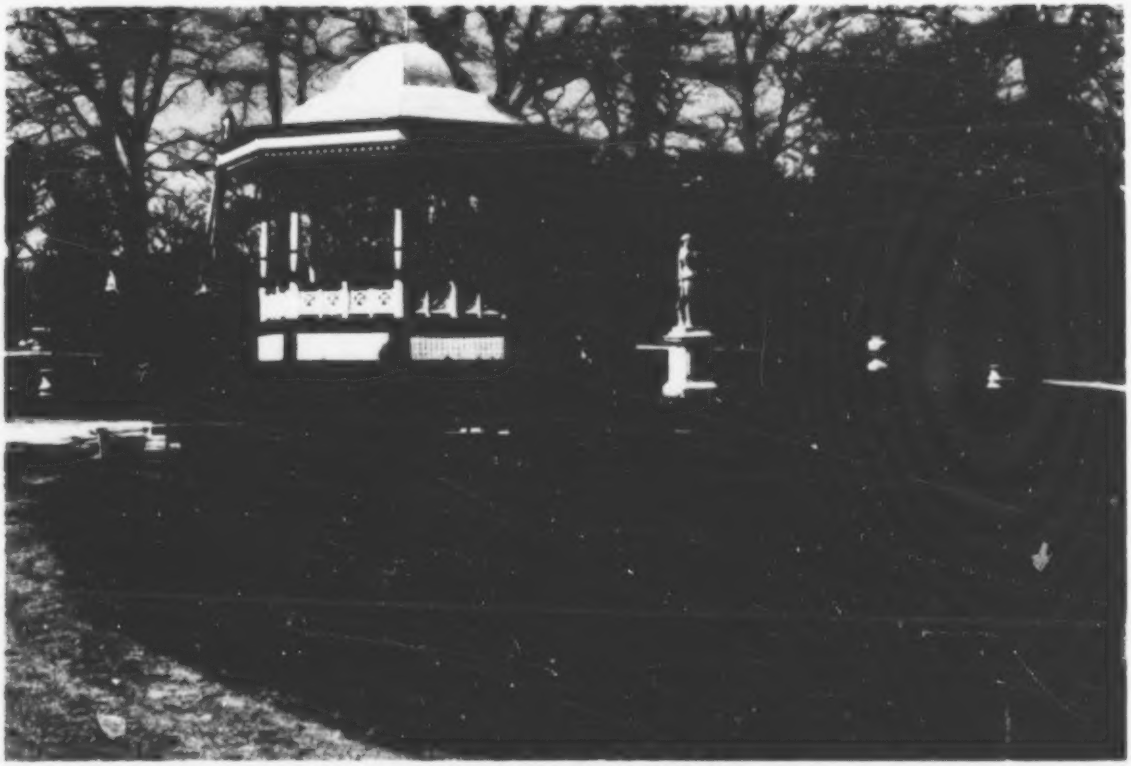


Fig. 6.1 Bandshell in Halifax Gardens — typical of the Victorian parks of the period 1860-1900.

Niagara-on-the Lake

One of the earliest town sites in Upper Canada to be designated as a park was a four-acre parcel of land in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, shown on an 1844 map drawn up by the Royal Engineers.[6] This site was originally reserved as a militia hospital lot, but on the removal of the Royal Engineers in the late 1840s, the park was turned over to the town under an agreement "that it was not to be sold or built upon except as required for park purposes only."[7] Early records show the municipality first expended funds for fencing and other improvements in 1855. However, no document appears to exist to register this transfer; "at any rate, the Town has been unable to find any trace of one."[8] However, there exist certain entries in Town records strongly supporting the contention that this land was turned over to the Town in the mid 1850s.[9] The legal transfer was not finalized until 1935.

One of the few references to the site in the minutes of the town council in 1856 records a motion authorizing the receipt of tenders from parties willing to rent it for one crop, again suggesting that this "park" was more utilitarian than recreational, unlike the public parks in Kingston, Hamilton and Toronto that were being established in the same period.[10] To further complicate the question of ownership and use of the land by the citizens as a public park, the lot was leased to the town by the militia for 21 years from April 7, 1917 to April 1939.[11] One can only conclude that despite the question of legal ownership, the land functioned as a public park since funds were first expended by the town council towards its upkeep in 1855. The records clearly show improvements to the site through "tree planting, grass and work in 1871 and every year to the present time (1913)."[12] The park had come under the control of a committee of Council known as the Park and Shade Tree Committee since 1833.

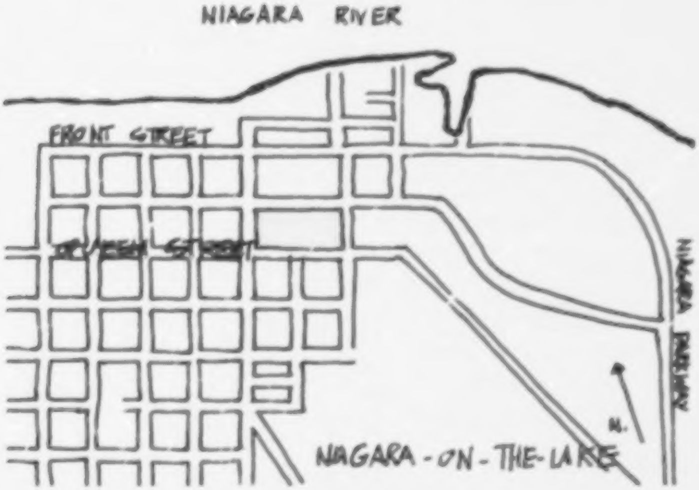

NIAGARA RIVER
FRONT STREET
QUEEN STREET
NIAGARA PARKWAY
N.
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

Fig. 6.2 Early "Town Park" site (1840s) in Niagara-on-the-Lake, in same location today.

This four-acre site exists today as a public park bounded by Byron, Picton and Wellington Streets.

Toronto

While Kingston replaced Toronto as the capital of Upper Canada in 1841, there was a feeling that Toronto had "an inevitable metropolitan future."[13] The courts remained in Toronto as did the Anglican and Catholic bishops, the Law Society, the Bank of Upper Canada, Upper Canada College and King's College, amongst other institutions. Toronto's "early social, economic and political elite were either government officials or became government officers or received government patronage."[14]

The British tradition of a landed gentry was carried over in the new settlement, as "the safeguard of good order and good manners."[15] In effect, the image of high society was sustained through a system of patronage. The system included so-called park lots, plots of land of 100 acres that were surveyed after the Simcoe plan and were made available for the building of suburban villas at the outskirts of the young capital. These

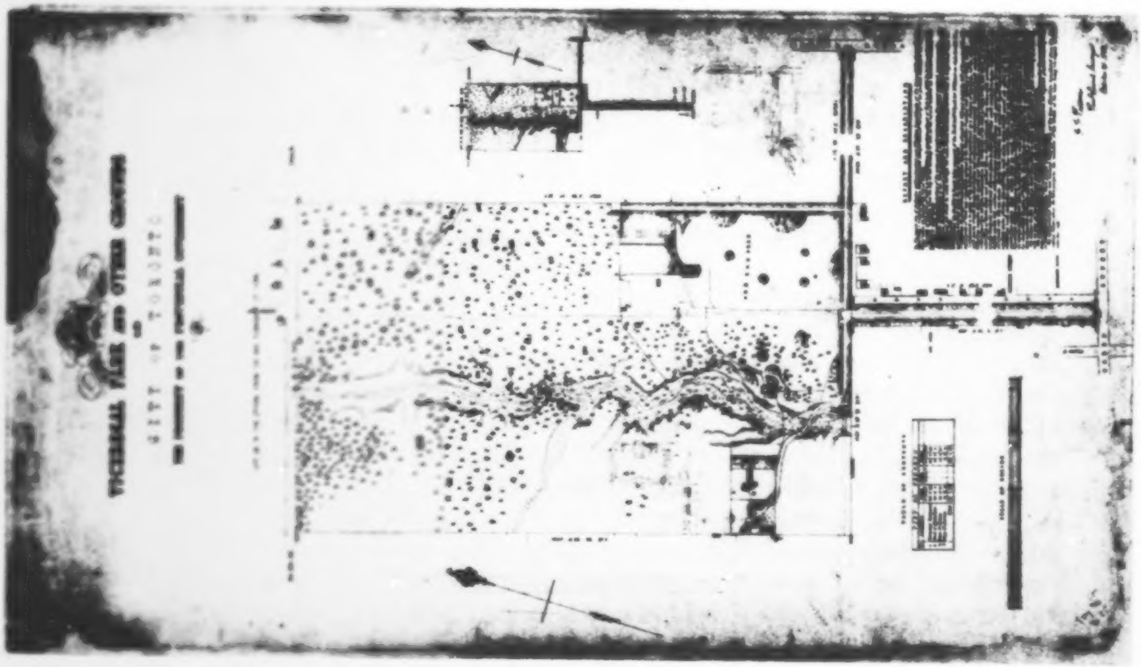


Fig. 6.3 Viceregal Park, Toronto 1854.

lands are not to be confused with a large tract of several hundreds of acres in a natural state, including massive pine trees on its northern portion, located westward along present day Queen Street and running to the north and known as the Viceregal Park, and originally intended as the future site of government buildings.[16] However, the site was never used for this purpose and was sold for private use. By the 1830s, there were several public squares including McDonell and Victoria squares.

The idea of the Toronto waterfront being dedicated for public use as a promenade or walk arose very early in Toronto's history. An editorial in the Upper Canada **Gazette** in 1826 stated that

> *We would take the opportunity of suggesting that a Public Walk, somewhere in the front of the town, on the Bank, would be a very desirable object. We are aware, however, that the necessary funds, when so much is doing on the streets, could not, perhaps, be well spaced for such a thing, but the comfort and convenience of it, we think, would be so highly appreciated that few would refuse to contribute their aid towards carrying it into effect.*[17]

No action was taken at this time but about a decade later public pressure for recreational open space in Toronto came from a group of citizens. A controversy arose over the future of the Lake Ontario waterfront, as to whether the military holdings should be subdivided for commercial-residential use or retained as a public park. This land was bounded by Front, Niagara, Queen and Peter Streets, and bisected by Bathurst Street. Such a controversy arose over the early recognition of the waterfront as a potential promenade. At that time Front St. was located at the water's edge on a bank just above

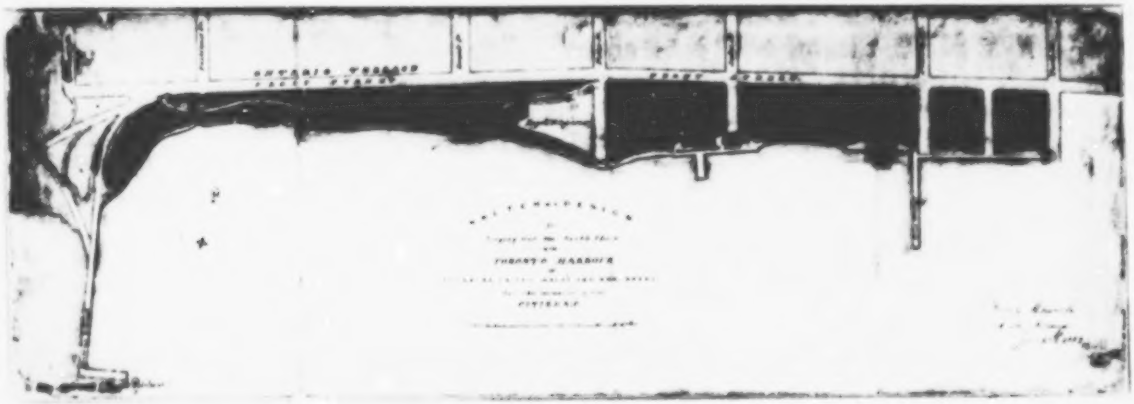


Fig. 6.4 Sketch & design for the proposed esplanade as a pleasure drive and walkway — Toronto waterfront 1852.

the beach. Front St. was one chain wide (66′) as was the practice of the day. A number of enlightened citizens could see the value of this frontage as a future broad esplanade to be formed by filling in the water frontage along Front St. However, as these were Crown lands, authority for such development, let alone any type of structure such as a wharf, was not forthcoming.

In 1840, the waterfront lots were transferred to the City from the Crown, opening the door to the possibility of an esplanade, with walks and gardens as shown on fig. 6.4, a proposed site design for public walkways.

Unfortunately, "public anxiety for the new means of transportation (railroads) was given rights over the esplanade."[18] By the early 1850s a network of on-grade tracks was built, virtually eliminating the possibility of an esplanade or park in this period. In fact, such public space was not designated on this site for almost 125 years with the acquisition of waterfront land by the federal government in 1972 as a national park. This parcel of land was incorporated into a larger complex known as Harbourfront, which includes a mixture of public and private development for commercial and residential use, along with public open space.

The esplanade concept in Toronto in the 1840s had a direct relationship to the public walk legislation in Britain in the previous decade, which was considered the best means to promote the well-being and health of citizens. As a follow-up to the idea of an esplanade, a Committee on Public Walks and Gardens was set up by the City Council in 1851. In 1860 all the city's public squares and parks were turned over to this committee, with the condition that no games were to be played on these sites without permission.

Negotiations to convert the large military holdings on the western edge of the city to public park grounds began in 1847, and in 1848, the 287-acre Garrison Reserve was leased to the municipal authorities on the condition that the city have "the land plowed, sowed with grass, enclosed with a fence, planted with trees, and laid out in pleasure grounds and an ornamental park" for the recreational needs of the general public.[19] The Reserve was located on the land where Old Fort York is located (see fig. 6.5). There is little evidence in the early records of the degree to which the terms of the lease were carried out, and the park appears to have lived a short life. The usurping of the waterfront lands and the development of the frontage for commerce, wharves, and the railroad "destroyed old patterns and altered dramatically the social valuation of this part of the city. The residual prestige still attached to this district in 1860 was to be short lived. The death of the waterfront as an amenity was part of the gradual reorientation of the city away from the lake."[20] The waterfront was destroyed by the railways and their attendant industry.[21] By 1870, the only remaining parts of the formerly prestigious waterfront were the Parliament Buildings on Front Street, the Bishop's Palace and Upper Canada College.[22]

Thus, the death blow was served to Upper Canada's first public park within a decade of its birth. The present Exhibition Park, the site of the Canadian National Exhibition, came to the city in a series of Crown grants in the period between 1848 and 1920. These lands were referred to as the Garrison Common and Exhibition Grounds until 1909 when the Commons and Fort York were sold to the city.

Several additional open spaces were dedicated as public parks in this same period. Ketchum Park (about two acres) was donated to the Village of Yorkville in 1856. Riverdale Park was originally part of the jail farm and was purchased by the city in 1856. The Riverdale Zoo was established on this site, which with further land purchases in 1883 covered over 108 acres.[23] Additional Crown military reserves along the waterfront were granted to the City for park purposes in 1858, and were known as Stanley Park. This site was converted to wartime housing in 1944, leaving only seven acres of the original 22 acres. On January 1, 1859, the University of Toronto granted a lease to the City of Toronto for 999 years on a piece of land known as Queen's Park with the understanding that this property was to be maintained as a public park.[24] The university retained the right to develop a botanical garden to be open to the public and maintained by the university. In 1894, the provincial legislature was constructed on this site.

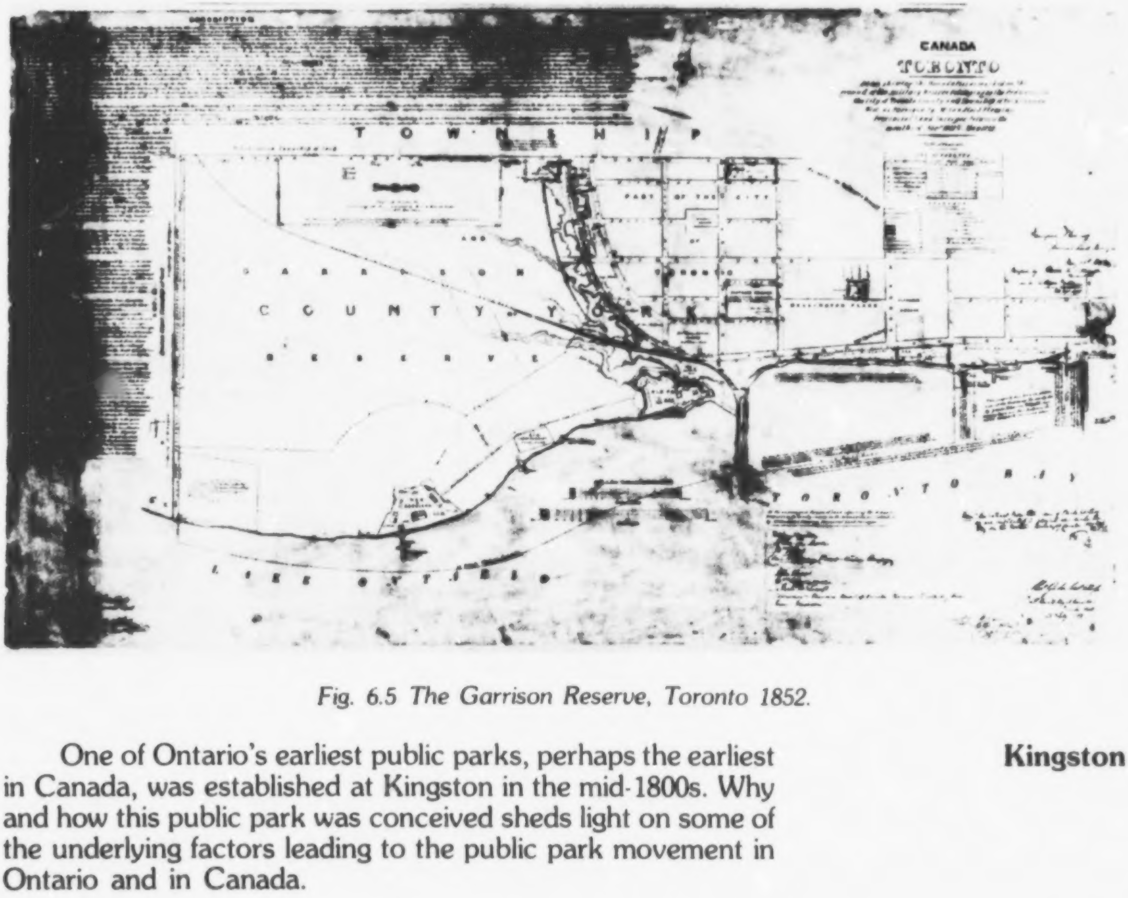

CANADA
TORONTO
TOWNSHIP
PART OF THE CITY
GARRISON
COUNTY OF YORK
RESERVE
TORONTO BAY
LAKE ONTARIO

Fig. 6.5 The Garrison Reserve, Toronto 1852.

Kingston

One of Ontario's earliest public parks, perhaps the earliest in Canada, was established at Kingston in the mid-1800s. Why and how this public park was conceived sheds light on some of the underlying factors leading to the public park movement in Ontario and in Canada.

As was discussed in chapter 3, Kingston was originally established as a military garrison and by the early 1840s had a population of almost 10,000. While the town remained primarily a military base, there was a well established business and professional group in the town, and while Kingston was beginning to lag behind York and Hamilton in economic activity, it did not lag behind in its pretensions to an elite social climate.

Between 1838 and 1860, "there occurred an exodus of merchants and professionals and their families, from residences in the original city core to spacious country villas, or to town houses surrounded by extensive grounds."[25] More than 40 country residences were established in this period with the owners moving from their original residences in town.[26] This movement seemed to be an attempt by the wealthier people of Kingston to "emulate the trappings of a gentry class,"[27] by establishing a "country seat" similar to those of their English counterparts. They claimed a right to a higher social status, by proving their ability to afford the life of ladies and gentlemen of leisure. The villa movement was not a result of high density conditions, as the new country houses were built to the west of the old town (now the area adjacent to Queen's University) where taxes were low. But this advantage was offset by travel distance to work and lack of services. The villa development flew in the face of economic stagnation, and "testifies to the strength with which the (traditional) conservative values were held."[28] It is also remarkable that Kingston's business community was relatively small and did not have the strong economic base of other cities in the province. Furthermore it occurred in a time of great political turmoil, with the Rebellion of 1837, Lord Durham's Report, the Union of the Canadas and Lord Sydenham's extraordinary administrative reforms.[29] All this in a period in which pigs were running loose in the streets and cows were maintained by many centretown dwellers!

It was during the same period (the late 1830s) that Lord Sydenham assembled on secret orders the land known as the Artillery Parade Ground, now known as City or Macdonald Park, for the purpose of locating Parliament at Kingston. Charles Poulett Thompson (Lord Sydenham) was an extremely capable English businessman and politician who had been appointed Governor General of the British North American colonies in 1839. In Canada he became, in effect, his own prime minister. He was "greatly assisted by a large imperial loan which permitted him to sponsor a fresh round of public works."[30] It was from this source of funds that the land for the present day City Park in Kingston was purchased.

When five years later it was decided to move Parliament to Montreal instead, a petition was sent from the City of Kingston to the Governor General, pointing out that considerable funds had been expended in anticipation of government functions in Kingston, and further, that 25 acres of land had been acquired for the same purpose on the western edge of the town by the Imperial Government. The petitioners respectfully requested that, as a concession, this 25 acres of land be returned to the City "that it may be laid out as a Public Square in all time to come, for the health and convenience of the inhabitants."[31] No immediate action was taken because of the impending threat of war with the United States over the rights to the Oregon Territory. Eight years later, in 1851, the Commissioner of Crown Lands informed the City that it could use an adjacent property as a park while the transfer of the land in question was being considered, on the condition that "the Military Exercise Ground, which was to be laid out as an ornamental park, was to be well fenced and open to the public."[32]

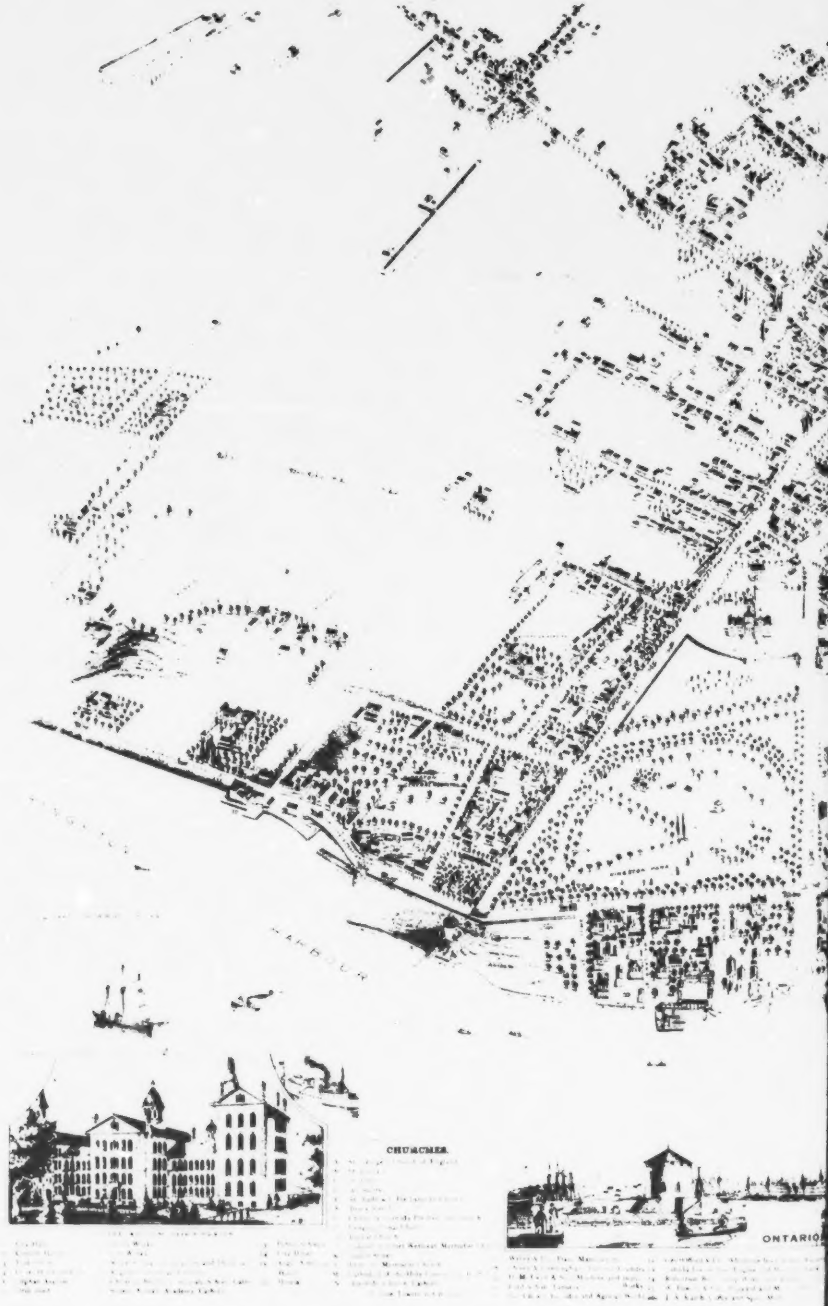
Although the park had been officially established, its development was viewed as excessive by the city council, and "so it was for years to come; money, or rather the lack of it, was to prevent the orderly development of the first public park in Canada West."[33] However, improvements to the site appear to have begun in 1854.

The Subscribers' Committee made an eloquent plea for the Park in 1853, in a report to City Council:

> *The Park, that great and almost indispensable appendage to the City, was planned to be a haven of rest where man, escaping from the turmoil, dust and strife of the city can relax his energies, and for a season forget the cares and sins of the world while reclining in the shade of fragrant and beautiful trees . . . and for youth, it is the season of enjoyment, and were we blessed with pleasure grounds, our youth would there resort for enjoyment and activity to both body and mind, instead of possibly being tempted to places which to say the least, are of doubtful propriety . . . and in a pecuniary view, the committee have no doubt that the city would be greatly benefitted . . . by the greater number of strangers who would visit us.*[34]

A noble cause indeed! One is tempted to arrive at the conclusion that the new park would be a panacea for the sins and moral laxity of its decadent citizenry, and serve as a great rallying ground for a proper way of life, as exemplified by the "better classes" of the town. Shades of Victorian Britain!

The original design for the park was laid out by a landscape gardener from Rochester whose name is not included in the early town records. By 1855 trees and shrubs were planted and carriage drives gravelled. One of the major endeavours of the


HARBOUR
CHURCHES
ONTARIO

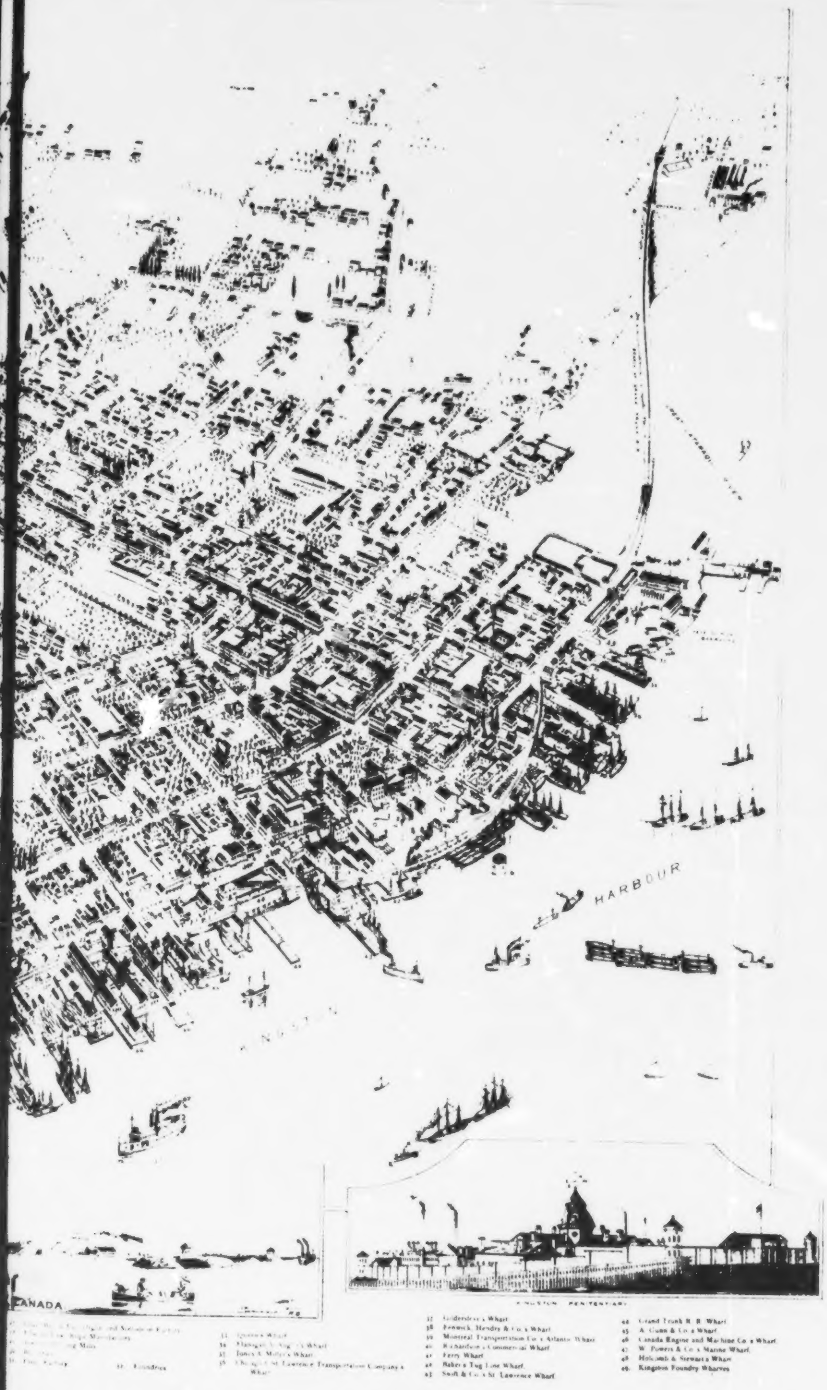

HARBOUR
KINGSTON
CANADA
KINGSTON PENITENTIARY
37 Gildersleeve's Wharf
38 Fenwick, Hendry & Co.'s Wharf
39 Montreal Transportation Co.'s Atlantic Wharf
40 Richardson's Commercial Wharf
41 Ferry Wharf
42 Baker's Tug Line Wharf
43 Swift & Co.'s St. Lawrence Wharf
44 Grand Trunk R. R. Wharf
45 A. Gunn & Co.'s Wharf
46 Canada Engine and Machine Co.'s Wharf
47 W. Powers & Co.'s Marine Wharf
48 Holcomb & Stewart's Wharf
49 Kingston Foundry Wharves

Fig. 6.6 Kingston City Park 1875.

period was the construction of a small wooden observatory, which was located in the centre of the park.

Thus was conceived and developed one of Upper Canada's first public parks, available free to all the inhabitants of the town, and financially supported by local government. The park remains on its original site, along with the landscape design barely altered from the original layout.

Hamilton

Hamilton began in 1816 as a port village at the head of Lake Ontario and achieved city status by 1846. By 1851 the population had increased to more than 14,000 persons comprised primarily of immigrants from the British Isles and the U.S. By 1850, Hamilton boasted a Board of Trade, a Horticultural Society, a Mercantile Library, and a Board of Health. The population was three-tiered, entrepreneurial, artisan and labour. To a large degree there was inequality in the community, characteristic of the commercial cities of this period, and promoted by a transient population of newly arriving immigrants. About one-tenth of the adult men, at the most, controlled virtually all the resources necessary to the wealth, well-being and prosperity of the rest.[35] In this period two-thirds of the employed women were household servants, and almost one-quarter of the men unskilled or semi-skilled labour.

Hamilton was controlled by an influential entrepreneurial class, whose status depended on achievement rather than on birth, dominated by Canadian-born Protestants.[36] The manner in which Gore Park was established in the central downtown business area exemplifies the wealth and dominance of the town's business community. Two gentlemen, Mr. George Hamilton and Mr. Nathaniel Hughson, agreed to contribute an equal amount of land to the City to form a public square on

James Street. Hughson reneged on his promise, however, and as a result Gore Square became a triangle, half the planned size. For many years the area was used as a gathering point, especially by visitors who used Hamilton as a stopover at the end of Lake Ontario on the journey from Montreal and Toronto to Detroit. The square boasted a source of water of excellent quality that was an attraction both to visitors and the local population. Gore Square was renamed Gore Park in 1852 and set aside for public use under provincial statute. It has continued to serve as a social gathering point and "speakers' corner" up to the present. By 1860 the park was partially landscaped, two ornamental fountains and a drinking fountain having been built complete with a brass drinking cup attached by a chain to avoid theft.[37]

Victoria Park, another of Hamilton's early parks, was the site of the Crystal Palace, built in 1859-60 to house the Provincial Exhibition, which was held annually in rotation with four cities in Upper Canada. These exhibition grounds were called the Great Central Fair and were the forerunner of the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto.[38]

Leading Park Proponents

A basic question surrounding the origins of public parks in Ontario focuses on the individuals and personalities who are considered the instigators and leaders in the establishment of the first public parks. Such personalities are difficult to identify. History does not reveal a knight in shining armour who led the forces in the battle to provide public parks and recreation grounds in Canada as was the case in the United States, where Frederick Law Olmsted, William Cullen Bryant and Andrew Jackson Downing were leaders in the fight for public parks. The emergence of public parks in the towns of Upper Canada seems to have been based on local attitudes and actions of

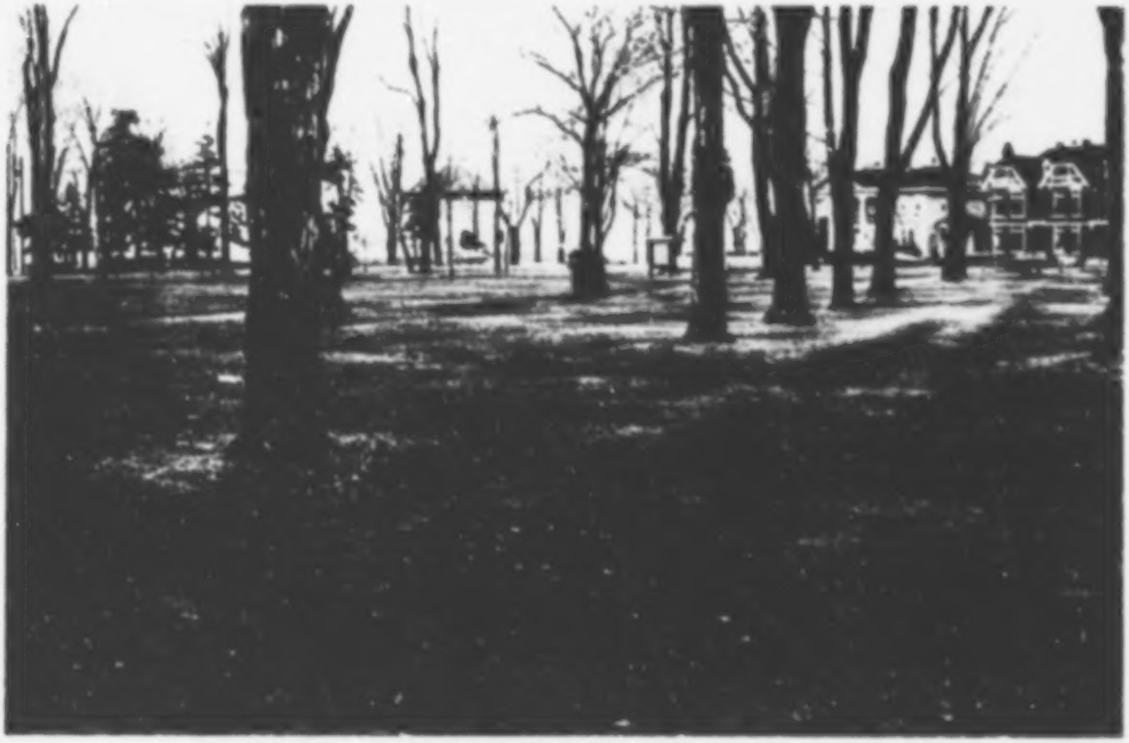


Fig. 6.7 Kingston City Park (1982) — former carriage-way.

civic committees rather than on the proselytizing of a single dominant personality, with one or two exceptions, supporting the notion that "Canadian statesmen have succeeded in shrouding themselves in obscurity."[39]

However, there is strong evidence to show that the members of the various civic committees who led the way in the establishment of public parks were personalities holding

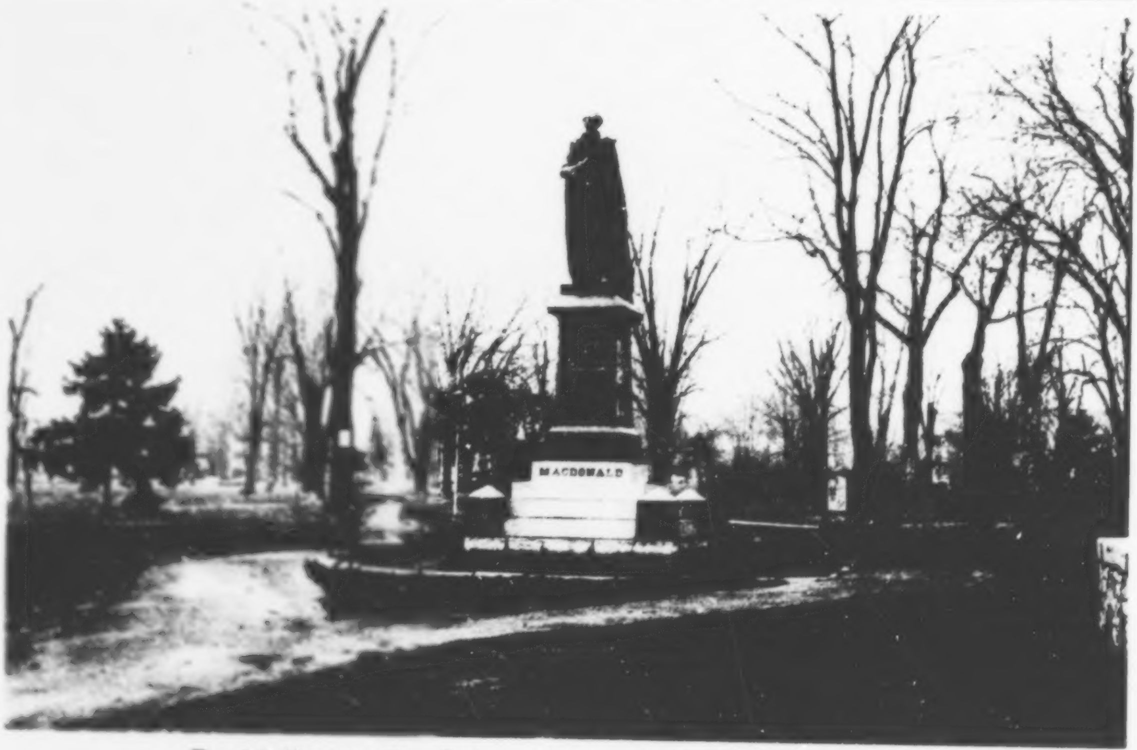
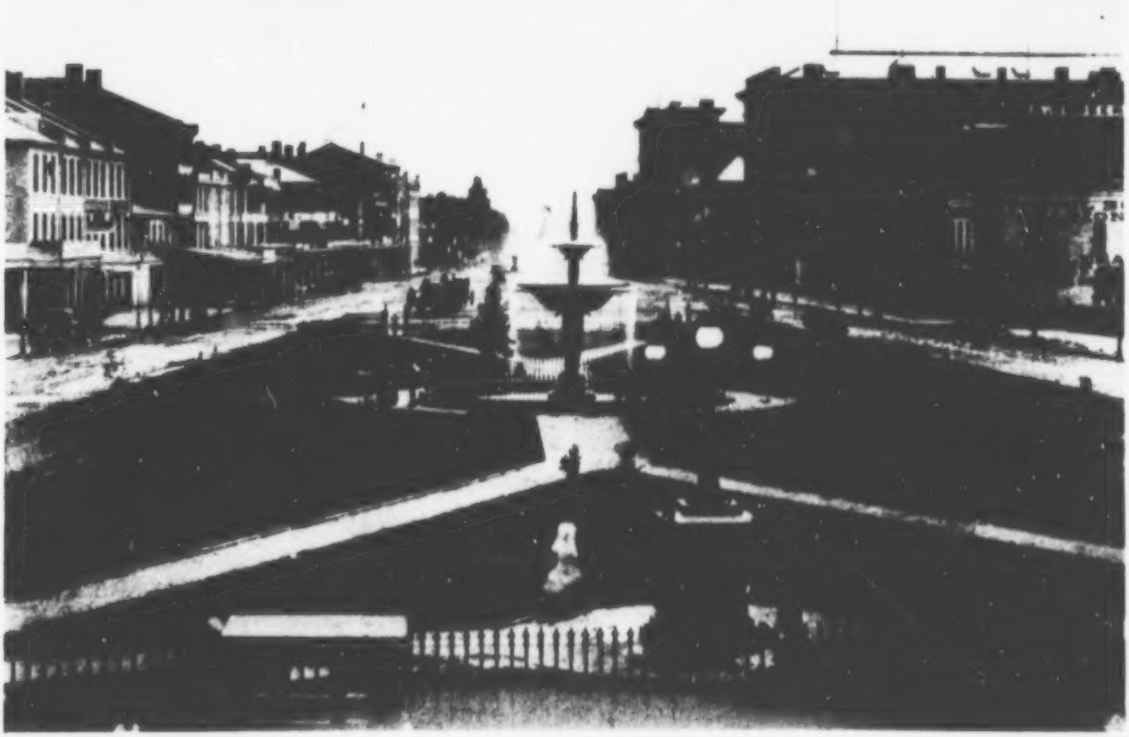


Fig. 6.8 Kingston City Park — Sir John A. Macdonald statue (1982).

both power and influence at the local level, and in some cases at the provincial level. While the land that was set aside by Lord Sydenham in Kingston eventually became one of Ontario's (if not Canada's) first functioning public parks, it was the members of the City Council in Kingston and not Lord Sydenham who petitioned and received permission to establish this land as a public park.

One of the few personalities that emerges from the historic past for his contribution to the establishment of the first public parks is Mr. George Hamilton, the prosperous businessman of the mid-1800s, who donated the land for Gore Park in Hamilton. A decade or so later, however, a number of individuals began to emerge as key actors in the founding of Ontario's early public parks.

Fig. 6.9 Gore Park, Hamilton 1861.



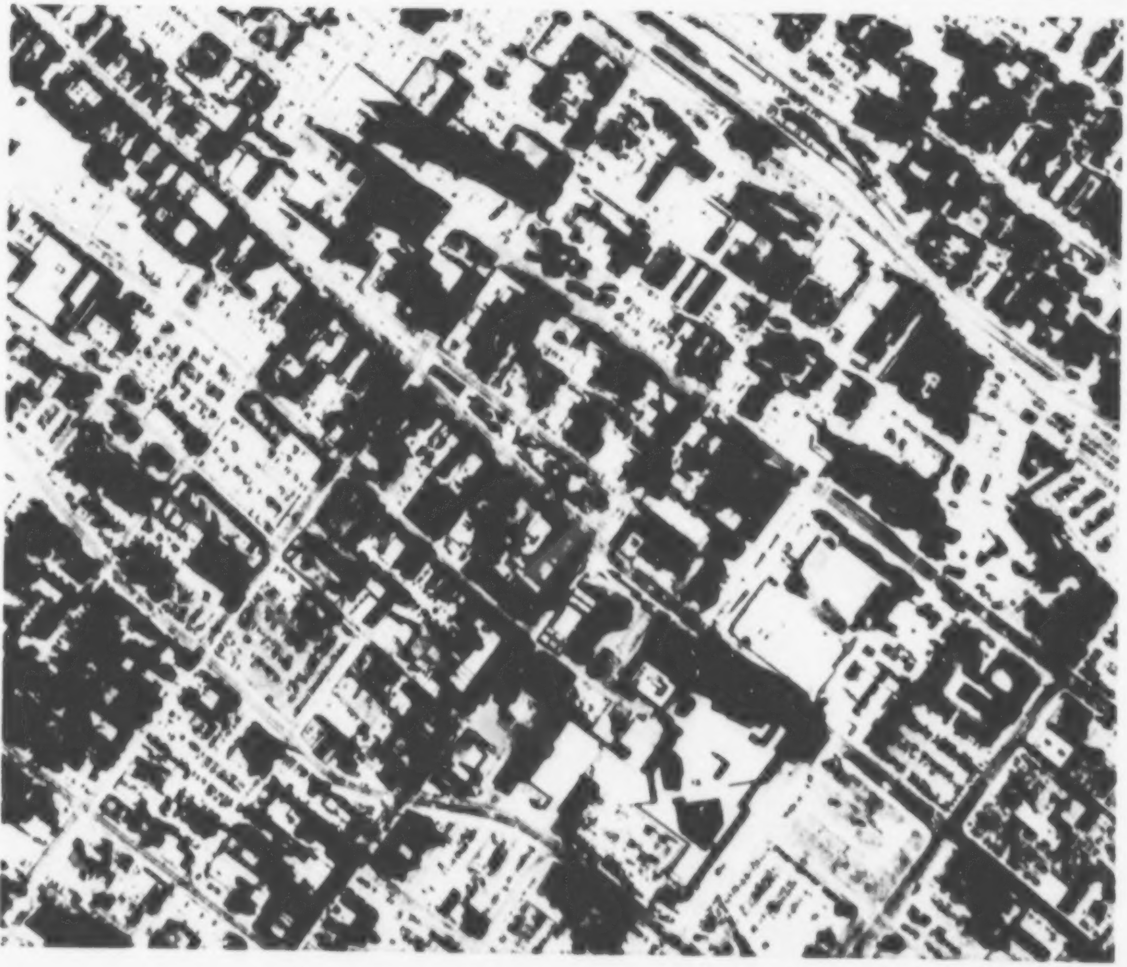


Fig. 6.10 Gore Park, Hamilton — air photo 1975.

Fig. 6.11 Gore Park, Hamilton (1982).

Summary

Which town or city in early Ontario should be recognized as establishing the first public park, set aside primarily for recreation and supported by local funding? A first glance would suggest Niagara-on-the-Lake. However, despite the fact that the term "park" was used to designate a specific area, the town did

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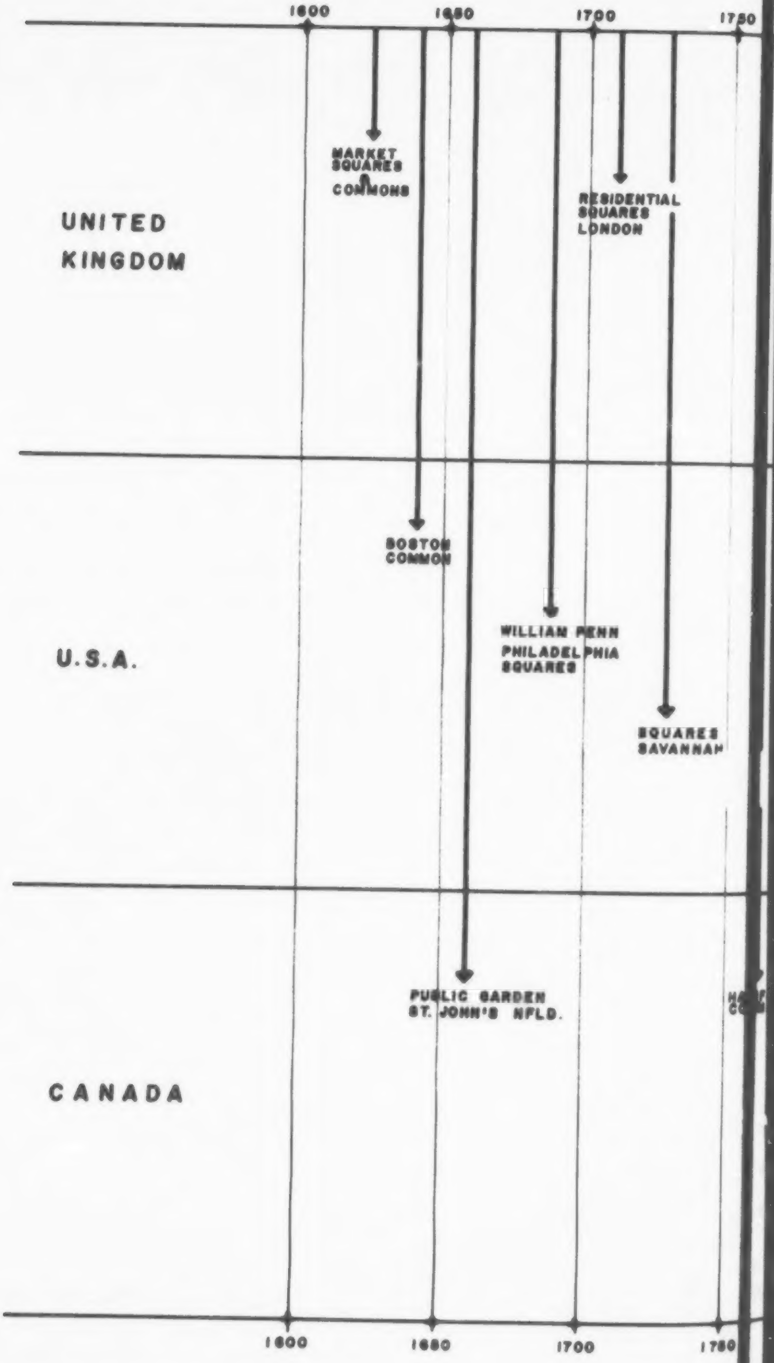
not attempt to improve the site until 1855, and indeed the land appears to have been leased for crop purposes until at least 1916.

The leasing of the 287-acre Garrison Reserve to the City of Toronto in 1848 from the federal military holdings on condition the land be laid out as pleasuring grounds and an ornamental park, ranks as one of the first urban areas dedicated as a public park, despite the lack of development for public use for a number of years. However, the land remained under lease for many years before the City of Toronto acquired ownership and it appears the land was never developed to provide a broad range of recreational opportunities as a single purpose public park.

Gore Square had served as a public meeting and gathering place by local citizens and visitors to Hamilton for at least six years before this space was dedicated by provincial statute in 1852 as a public park, but it remained in a rough and unimproved condition until about 1859. Because of its location in the city core and its relatively small size (about one acre), its form and function cannot be compared to the other early public parks of the same period. Gore Park was conceived as a public square and it continues to serve that function in downtown Hamilton today.

The dedication of the 25-acre City Park in Kingston in 1851 (often referred to as Macdonald Park) on land known as The Artillery Parade Ground also ranks as one of the first public parks in Ontario. By 1855 certain improvements had been carried out and the public began to use and enjoy the park, owned and managed by the City of Kingston. It is apparent that if one placed certain constraints on the term "public park" in terms of ownership, development and use, City Park in Kingston must be recognized as the first locally owned, **developed**, and managed urban park in Ontario.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UNITED KINGDOM
MARKET SQUARES & COMMONS
RESIDENTIAL SQUARES LONDON
U.S.A.
BOSTON COMMON
WILLIAM PENN PHILADELPHIA SQUARES
SQUARES SAVANNAH
CANADA
PUBLIC GARDEN ST. JOHN'S NFLD.
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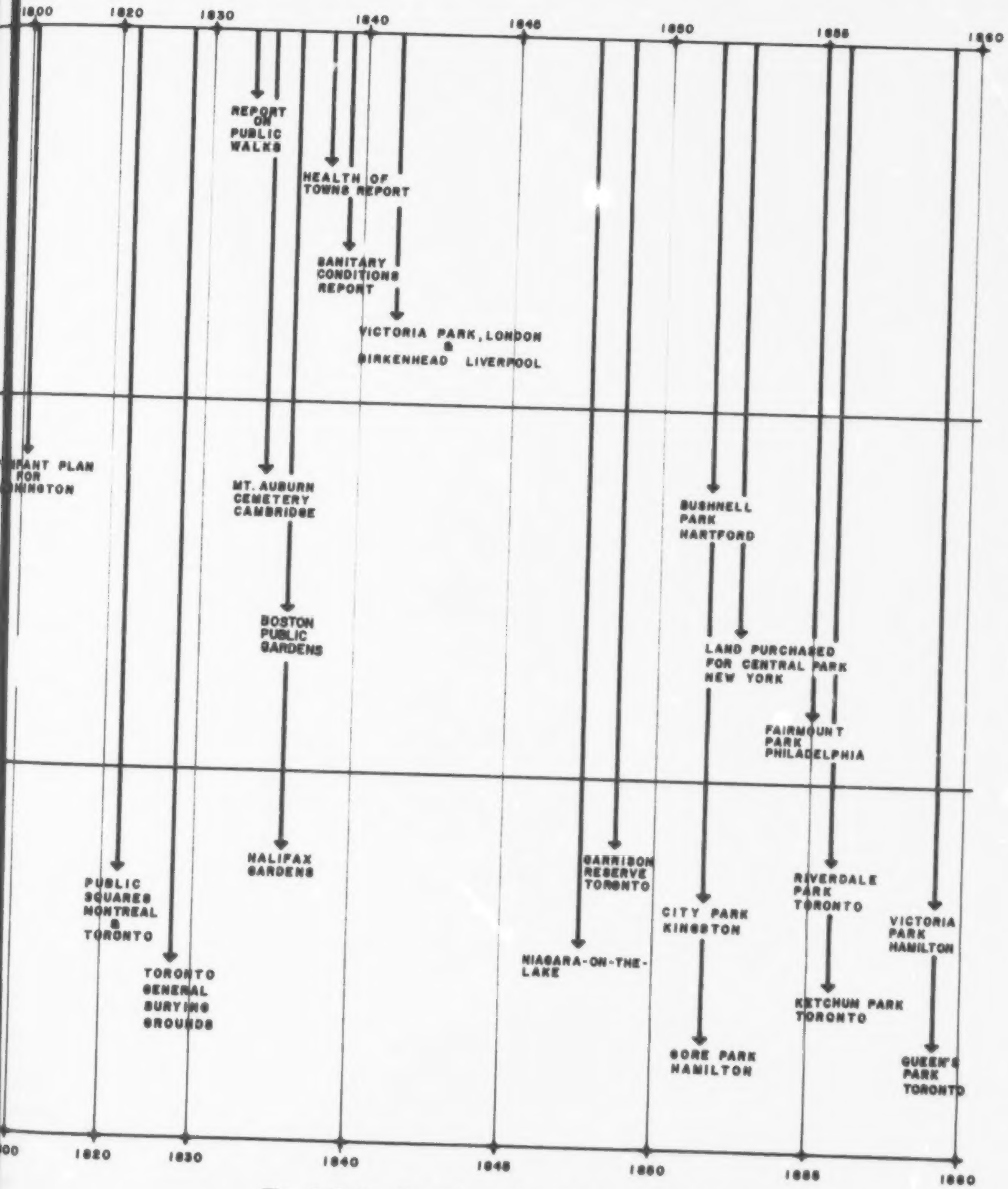

Fig. 6.12 An Overview of origins of public parks – U.K., U.S.A. and Canada 1600-1860 (J.R.Wright /'83)

An overview of the origins of public parks in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Canada is shown on the preceding pages (fig.6.9), showing that the first public parks in Ontario were developed a few years earlier than those in the United States, within a dozen or so years of the first public parks in Britain.

NOTES

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7. THE RATIONALE FOR PUBLIC PARKS

> The park became, and still is, a glimpse of nature — idealized, romanticized after the eighteenth century English naturalist movement.
>
> J. S. French

It is important to try to uncover the reasons behind the establishment of the first public parks in Ontario to be supported by public funds, and open to every citizen for recreation.

By 1851, Toronto was the largest city in Upper Canada with nearly 30,000 people. The next largest city was Hamilton with 14,000 persons. The social conditions in Toronto or in any other Ontario city or town were strikingly different from those in Birmingham or New York. The living conditions in Ontario were relatively good compared to more densely populated and more industrialized centres in Europe and the United States. Although by 1850 early settlement conditions were largely overcome, political unrest was under control and economic conditions were improving, the population still lived primarily in rural or village conditions, and the towns and cities were still small enough to allow relatively easy access to the countryside. The working day, and week, were long, and a large proportion of the urban population worked at labouring jobs.

When we look at this picture, it is remarkable that Canada's first truly public parks came about at all. The first public parks in England had only been established in 1843, while there were virtually no public parks established in the United States before 1852. Canada's first public parks can be attributed to the beliefs and actions of a few enlightened and powerful personalities acting through public committees, who attempted to duplicate in the New World the conditions in Britain from which they had so recently come. Both Kingston and York, for instance, had "their physical lay-out and social structure . . . determined by the imperial government's concern to build copies of British society in the Upper Canadian wilderness."[1]

In Upper Canada, the holders of wealth and power, primarily British in origin, had the capacity for **noblesse oblige** and to share some of the benefits of their class with the less fortunate, based on the British model. There was no profound social malaise or urgent urban crisis that precipitated the original public parks as in Britain. It was very simply an existing concept that was brought to the new country and applied under vastly different social conditions. The public park emerged in Ontario to satisfy a newly perceived need that was not satisfied by the existing public open spaces such as the square and marketplace, which remained as places for intense social interaction and commercial activity. The original public parks of Ontario satisfied a concept, rather than a reality, motivated by the altruism of the elite.

Canada's first public parks in Kingston, Hamilton and Toronto came about as the result of elite leadership, by relatively few persons. There was no common ideology or attempt to pressure the body politic by the general public, and these first parks in Ontario did not originate as the result of a popular social movement. Such a popular movement was to come at least 30 years later, with the passing of the Public Parks Act of 1883 by the Ontario provincial government, the first such Act in Canada. By the advent of the First World War, public parks were an accepted fact in town and city growth in Ontario.

The military bureaucracies that were in place in Kingston and Toronto may have played a significant role in the early establishment of public parks in both centres. In Kingston, this may have come about partly as the result of the lessened concerns for defence against the Americans, and perhaps partly in order to compensate the people of Kingston for the fact that the new capital for Upper Canada was to be located elsewhere. In the case of Toronto, the motive to lease land for parks may well have been an expeditious way for the British to divest itself of excess lands no longer necessary for defence, with little regard for local needs.

Many of the areas set aside for public parks in Ontario were military lands no longer required for military purposes, as opposed to Britain where the original park lands were primarily private gardens and 'parks' of nobility.

The chairman of the Committee of Public Walks and Gardens for Toronto defended the preservation of public park areas before Council in 1859, claiming that parks were of benefit to every social class in the community.

- *In the first place they furnish to the wealthy places of agreeable resort, either for driving or walking, and free from exposure to the heat and dust of an ordinary road . . . thus enabling them to enjoy the promotion of health and morality.*
- *In the second place, for the mechanic and working classes generally, public grounds are of incalculable advantage: How much better it is for these families to have these places of healthful recreation and exercise, than to have them exposed to the crowded streets of the city.*
- *What more pleasing sight to the philanthropic mind than to witness the wholesome rivalry of the mothers of families, on the Sabbath or the weekday 'Simmer Eve' as to whose children shall appear the cleanliest and neatest clad. How are such, and kindred inspirations calculated to elevate and refine the mind, and improve the condition of all.*[2]

The first public parks in Ontario were generally located at the edge of the residential areas and as a result were not always readily accessible to many of the citizens. As an indication that the park was intended to serve the entire population of the city, many parks became known as "City Park."

It seems that the early parks in Upper Canada were created to serve the dual purpose of beauty and nature appreciation, with public health and morals of equal importance. The first public parks in Britain had also originated from concern for health, fresh air and relaxation and a deep Victorian concern for public morals, with the conviction that nature could provide a counter attraction to the sinful influences of the city. As in Britain, the Upper Canadian public parks were seen as a relief, or escape and retreat from urban conditions, and for relaxation of mind and body. By contrast, the public square was the centre of social interaction and was part of the action and chaos of the city.

Recreation in the parks was limited to strolling, picnicking, family outings, relaxing and appreciating natural beauty, band concerts, informal games (i.e., cricket, not active), and carriage drives for the "better" classes. Very active games and sports were considered inappropriate in the parks, and this restriction led to the playground movement towards the end of the nineteenth century. Eventually it resulted, in the post World War II period, in a schism between resource-oriented park proponents and user-oriented recreationists, a rift which has slowly healed in the combining of most local park and recreation departments.[3]

Although the first public parks in Ontario were established by the middle of the nineteenth century, it would be another thirty years before a public parks movement developed, after the passage of the Public Parks Act of 1883 by the Province of Ontario.

NOTES

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1. Barrie Drummon Dyster, **Toronto 1840 - 1860: Making It In A British Protestant Town**, University of Toronto History Department, 1970, p. 12.
2. Elsie McFarland, **Development of Public Recreation in Canada**, Canadian Parks/Recreation Association, Ottawa, 1975, p. 14.
3. A more detailed account of this schism between park and recreation departments is contained in Part III of this series.

APPENDIX A

Date of incorporation of Ontario Villages, Towns and Cities*

		Date of Incorporation		
Urban Centre	Country or Census Division	As a Village	As a Town	As a City
Belleville	Hastings		1834	1877
Brantford	Brant	1830	1847	1877
Brockville	Leeds	No record	1832	
Chippawa	Welland	1849		
Cobourg	Northumberland	1804	1837	
Cornwall	Stormont		1834	
Dundas	Wentworth	1801	1847	
Galt	Waterloo	1850	1856	1915
Goderich	Huron	No record	1850	
Guelph	Wellington		1850	1879
Hamilton	Wentworth	1816	1833	1846
Ingersoll	Oxford	1852	1860	
Kingston	Frontenac	1783	1838	1846
London	Middlesex		1840	1855
Niagara	Lincoln		1845	
Oshawa	Ontario	1850	1879	1924
Ottawa	Carleton	1827	1847	1854
Paris	Brant	1850	1855	
Perth	Lanark		1851	
Peterborough	Peterborough		1850	1905
Picton	Prince Edward		1837	
Port Hope	Durham	1834	1850	
Prescott	Grenville	1834	1860	
Preston	Waterloo	1852	1900	
Richmond	Carleton	1850		
St. Catharines	Lincoln		1845	
St. Thomas	Elgin	1852	1860	1881
Simcoe	Norfolk	1851	1878	
Thorold	Welland	1850	1874	
Toronto	York	1793	1817	1834
Woodstock	Oxford	1851	1856	1901

Under the terms of the Baldwin Act of 1849, a village was a district having a population exceeding 750 persons on an area not exceeding 500 acres; a town was a settlement of 2,000 persons or more; and a city had more than 15,000 persons.

APPENDIX B

Definitions of selected terms used for open space — 1785 to the present.

COMMON

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	An open ground equally used by many persons. egs. "Then take we down his load, and turn him off, Like to the empty ass, to shake his ears, And graze in *commons*. (Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.)[1]
1851	A tract of ground, the use of which is not appropriated to an individual, but belongs to the public or to a number. Thus, we apply the word to an open ground or space in a highway, reserved for public use.[2]
1875	An open ground, the use of which is not appropriated to any individual, but belongs to the public, or to many persons; a public unenclosed space: - a term sometimes applied to an enclosed public ground, or park, in a city. "Does anyone respect a *common* as much as he does his garden?" South.[3]
1899	1. A tract of ground, the use of which is not appropriated to an individual, but belongs to the public, or to a number. Thus we apply the word to an open ground or space in a highway, reserved for public use. 2. In *law*, an open ground, or that soil the use of which belongs equally to the inhabitants of a town, or lordship, or to a certain number of proprietors.[4]

COMMON

Definition and Interpretation	Year
1. Of or pertaining to all that is, to all the human race, or to all in a given country, region or locality; being a general possession or right; of a public nature or character. "Then there was the *common* land held as separate property, not by single owners, but by communities, something like the lands of colleges and other corporations at the present day, and as land is still held by village communities in India and the eastern Slavonic countries of Europe. 2. Common land, loosely, land owned in severalty but used in common; more strictly, land owned by the community, and not being appropriated for the time to cultivation by any individual, used as waste or open land for common pasturage.[5]	**1904**
A tract of ground, the use of which is not appropriated to an individual, but belongs to the public or to a number.[6]	**1924**
Land belonging to a community.[7]	**1931**
Land generally, or a tract of land owned by a town; land open to the use of all.[8]	**1958**
A tract of land considered as the property of the community, open to the use of all.[9]	**1978**

ESPLANADE

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	In fortification, the same with the glacis of the counterscarp originally: but now it is taken for the empty space between the *glacis* of a citadel (a sloping bank) and the first houses of the town.[1]
1851	1. In *fortification*, the glacis of the counterscarp, or the sloping of the parapet of the covered way toward the country; or the void space between the glacis of a citadel and the first houses of a town. 2. In *gardening*, a grass-plot.[2]
1875	1. A level ground within a fortified place, used for exercise, a walk, etc; properly, the space between the fortifications of the town and those of the citadel. 2. A grassy plot in a garden. (Simmonds) 3. Any open level public walk or drive near the sea.[3] (Simmonds)
1899	1. Fortification (definition as in previous texts). 2. In gardening, a grass-plot.[4]

ESPLANADE

Definition and Interpretation	**Year**
Any open level space or course near a town, especially a kind of terrace along the seaside, for public walks or drives. "All the world was gathered on the terrace of the Kursaal and the *esplanade* below it to listen to the excellent orchestra". (H. James)[5]	**1904**
Fort. A wide open space between the glacis of a citadel and the first houses of the town; any open level space near a town, especially a kind of terrace along the sea-side for public walks or drives.[6]	**1924**
Level piece of ground, esp. one used for public promenade; level space separating citadel of fortress from town.[7]	**1931**
A level open space, as before a fortress or along a waterside, for promenading, driving, etc.[8]	**1958**
1. A level, open stretch of land, as along a shore, used especially as a public walk. 2. An open embankment or level area before a fortress, designed to expose attackers.[9]	**1978**

GARDEN

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	A piece of ground inclosed, and cultivated with extraordinary care, planted with herbs or fruits for food, or laid out for pleasure, e.g. "In every *garden* should be provided flowers, fruit, shade and water." (Temple)[1]
1851	A piece of ground appropriated to the cultivation of herbs or plants, fruits and flowers; usually near a mansion-house.[2]
1875	A piece of ground enclosed and planted for the production of fruits, flowers or esculent plants. "God the first *garden* made, the first city Cain." (Cowley)[3]
1899	1. A piece of ground appropriated to the cultivation of herbs or plants, fruits and flowers, usually near a mansion house. 2. A rich, well cultivated spot or tract in the country, a delightful spot.[4]

GARDEN

Definition and Interpretation	**Year**
1. A plot of ground devoted to the cultivation of culinary vegetables, fruits, or flowering and ornamental plants. 2. A rich, well-cultivated spot or tract of country; a delightful spot.[5]	**1904**
A piece of ground appropriated to the cultivation of plants, fruits, flowers, or vegetables; a rich well-cultivated spot or tract of country.[6]	**1924**
Piece of ground devoted to growing flowers, fruits, or vegetables; ornamental grounds for public resort.[7]	**1931**
1. A place for the cultivation of flowers, vegetables or small plants. 2. Hence, any fertile or highly cultivated territory. 3. A piece of ground, commonly with ornamental plants or trees, used as a place of public resort: a botanical *garden*.[8]	**1958**
1. A place for the cultivation of flowers or small plants. 2. Any fertile, highly cultivated territory remarkable for the beauty of its vegetation. 3. (often pl.) A piece of ground, commonly with ornamental plants or trees, used as a place of public resort.[9]	**1978**

OVAL

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	None[1]
1851	None[2]
1875	A popular name for any curved figure resembling an ellipse, or the traverse section of an egg.[3]
1899	(Definitions pertaining to the oval shape but not necessarily to any type of "square").[4]
1904	Something which has such a shape, as a plot of ground or an open space in a city: as Berkley *oval*; "The Oval" at Kensington, London.[5]
1924	None[6]
1931	None[7]
1958	None[8]
1978	None[9]

PARK

Definition and Interpretation	Year
A piece of ground inclosed and stored with wild beasts of chase, which a man may have by prescription or the King's grant. Manwood in his forest law defines it thus: a park is a place for privilege for wild beasts that are beasts of the forest and of the chase; and those wild beasts are to have a firm peace and protection there, so that no man may hurt or chase them within the park, without licence from the owner; a park is of another nature than a chase or a warren; for a park must be inclosed, and may not lie open; if it does, it is a good cause of seizure into the King's hands: and the owner cannot have action against such as hunt in his park if it lies open. (Cowell)[1]	**1785**
An inclosed place in cities for public exercise or amusement, as *Hyde Park*, *St. James Park*, London.[2] (New use)	**1851**
1. An enclosure of pasture and woodland connected with a country residence, and used for purposes of recreation, but chiefly for the support of a herd of deer, though sometimes of cattle or of sheep. (Brande) 2. A piece of ground enclosed for public recreation or amusement; as, "Hyde *Park*, Regents' *Park*, Victoria *Park*, in London."	**1875**
SYN. - see *Forest*: *Forest* is a term applied to an extensive tract in its natural state covered with trees; a *woodland* or *woods*, a tract or piece of land covered with trees, commonly of less extent than a *forest*. A grove is a small *woodland*. *Forest*, *chase*, and *park* are all used technically to denote habitations for beasts to be hunted. *Forests* and *chases* lie open; *parks* are enclosed.[3]	

PARK

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1899	1. A large piece of ground inclosed for chase or other purposes of pleasure. Parks, in England, were originally grants out of forest lands with privileges which lasted only while they were kept inclosed. (Smart) 2. An inclosed place in cities for exercise or amusement.[4]
1904	1. In English law, a tract of land inclosed and privileged for wild beasts or of chase, by the monarch's grant or by prescription. 2. A considerable extent of pasture and woodlands surrounding or adjoining a country house and devoted primarily to purposes of recreation or enjoyment, and often serving to support a herd of cattle or a flock of sheep, or in Europe, stocked with deer. 3. A piece of ground, usually of considerable extent, set apart and maintained for public use, and laid for public use, and laid out in such a way as to afford pleasure to the eye as well as opportunity for open-air recreation; as, Central *Park* in New York, or Hyde *Park* in London. "Frequent in park with lady at his side, Ambling and prattling scandal as he goes; But rare at home. (Cowper, Task, ii, 381)[5]
1924	A large piece of ground inclosed and set apart for beasts of chase; a considerable extent of pasture and woodland surrounding or adjoining a mansion-house; a piece of public ground in or near a large town, laid out and kept for the sole purpose of pleasure and recreation.[6]

PARK

Definition and Interpretation	**Year**
Large enclosed piece of ground, usually with woodland and pasture, attached to a country house; enclosure in town ornamentally laid out for public recreation; *The Park*, (now) Hyde *Park*, (formerly St. James *Park*); large tract of land kept in a natural state for public benefit.[7]	**1931**
1. In English law, a tract of enclosed land stocked with wild beasts of the chase, and held through royal grant or by immemorial prescription. 2. A tract of land for public use in or near a city, usually laid out with walks, drives and recreation grounds. 3. An open square or plaza in a city usually containing shade trees and seats.[8]	**1958**
1. A tract of land for public use in or near a city, usually laid out with walks, drives, playgrounds, athletic fields, etc. 2. An open square in a city, usually containing shade trees, benches etc. 3. A national park. 4. An amusement park. 5. A large tract of land containing woods and fields, surrounding a country estate.[9]	**1978**

PICNIC

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	None.[1]
1851	This term is now applied to refreshments which a pleasure-party carry along with them on an excursion to the country, and also to the party itself. (New use)[2]
1875	An assembly or entertainment, in which the table is supplied from the contributions of those who attend; commonly held in the open air. "*Picnic*, an assembly of young people of both sexes at a tavern, where everyone pays his club." (Widegren, 1788)[3]
1899	Originally, an entertainment at which each person contributed some dish or article for the general table. The term is now applied to an entertainment carried with them by a party or an excursion of pleasure into the country, and also to the party itself.[4]
1904	Formerly, an entertainment in which every partaker contributed his share to the general table; now, an entertainment or pleasure-party the members of which carry provisions with them on an excursion, as from a city to some place in the country.[5]
1924	A pleasure-party the members of which carry provisions along with them on an excursion to some place in country.[6]
1931	No definition provided.
1958	An outdoor party, usually held in the countryside, during which a meal is eaten.[8]
1978	An outdoor social outing for which food is usually provided by the people participating.[9]

PLAYGROUND

Definition and Interpretation	Year
None.[1]	1785
None.[2]	1851
None.[3]	1875
None.[4]	1899
A piece of ground set apart for open-air recreation; especially such a piece of ground connected with a school, etc.[5]	1904
A piece of ground set apart for open-air recreation, especially connected with a school, etc. and for pupils.[6]	1924
Piece of ground used for play, especially at school.[7]	1931
None.[8]	1958
An area, usually adjoining a school, used for playing games and for recreation.[9]	1978

PLAZA

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	None.[1]
1851	None.[2]
1875	None.[3]
1899	None.[4]
1904	A public square or open space surrounded by houses in a Spanish or Spanish-American city; a market place in such a town; as the *Plaza* of San Francisco.[5]
1924	None.[6]
1931	None.[7]
1958	An open square or market place, especially in a Spanish or Spanish-American town.[8]
1978	An open square or market place in a town or city.[9]

PLEASURE GARDEN/PLEASURE GROUND

Definition and Interpretation	Year
None.[1]	**1785**
Ground adjoining a dwelling in the country, laid out in an ornamental manner and appropriated to pleasure or amusement. It is generally laid out in winding walks, and in forms borrowed direct from nature. A portion of lawn or grassy surface may be considered as essential to pleasure-ground.[2]	**1851**
An ornamental piece of ground devoted to pleasure or recreation. "Any very pleasing place or pleasure-grounds." (Holdsworth)[3]	**1875**
Ground laid out in an ornamental manner, and appropriated to pleasure or amusement.[4]	**1899**
Ground ornamental and appropriated to pleasure and amusement.[5]	**1904**
A piece of ground laid out in an ornamental manner and appropriated to pleasure or amusement.[6]	**1924**
Ground laid out for pleasure.[7]	**1931**
None.[8]	**1958**
None.[9]	**1978**

PROMENADE

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	None[1]
1851	1. A walk for pleasure and show, or exercise. 2. A place for walking.[2]
1875	1. A walk for pleasure or for exercise. (Burke) 2. A place for walking for pleasure or for exercise. (Montagu)[3]
1899	1. A walk for amusement or exercise. 2. A place for walking.[4]
1904	A walk for pleasure, or display, or for exercise. A place for walking; v. to promenade - recently, to take exercise in carriage saddle or boat.[5]
1924	A walk for pleasure and show or exercise; a place for walking in public.[6]
1931	Place, especially paved public walk, for this, i.e. walk, ride, drive taken for exercise, amusement, or display, or as a social ceremony.[7]
1958	1. A walk for amusement or exercise, or as part of a formal or social entertainment. 2. A ceremonial parade on horseback or in a vehicle. 3. A place for promenading.[8]
1978	A place for promenading (i.e., a walk for amusement or exercise, or as part of a formal or social entertainment).[9]

RECREATION

Definition and Interpretation	Year
1. Relief after toil or pain; amusement in sorrow or distress. "I'll visit The chapel where they lie, and tears, shed there, Shall be my *recreation*" (Shakespeare's Winter's Tale) 2. Refreshment, amusement, diversion. "Nor is that man less deceived, that thinks to maintain a constant tenure of pleasure, by a continual pursuit of sports and recreations: for all these things, as they refresh a man when weary, so they weary him when refreshed." (South)[1]	**1785**
1. Refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil; amusement; diversion. 2. Relief from toil or pain; amusement in sorrow or distress.[2]	**1851**
1. Relief or refreshment after toil or pain. 2. Amusement; diversion; pastime; sport. "Let the world have their may-games, wakes . . . and whatever sports and recreation please them, provided they be followed with discretion." (Buton)[3]	**1875**
1. Refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil: amusement; diversion. (South) 2. Relief from toil or pain; amusement in sorrow or distress. (Sidney)[4]	**1899**

RECREATION

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1904	The act of recreating, or the state of being recreated; refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil; amusement; diversion; also some occupation which serves to recreate or amuse. Recreation ground: a place set apart for sports and other recreation.[5]
1924	The act of recreating or the state of being recreated; refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil; amusement; entertainment.[6]
1931	(Refer to word recreate.) Of pastime, relaxation, holiday, employment, etc; refresh, entertain agreeably occupy. Amuse oneself, indulge in recreation.[7]
1958	1: Refreshment of body or mind, but generally of both; diversion; amusement. 2. Any pleasurable exercise or occupation.[8]
1978	Refreshment of body or mind; diversion; amusement.[9]

SQUARE

Definition and Interpretation	Year
n. (among other definitions) An area of four sides, with houses on each side, e.g. "The statue of Alexander VII stands in the large square of the town." *(Addison on Italy)*[1]	1785
In *arch.*, a mass of buildings in the form of a square, or the area enclosed by them.[2]	1851
An open area in a town or city formed by the junction or crossing of two or more streets.[3]	1875
(among other definitions) An area of four sides, with houses on each side. "The statue of Alexander VII stands in the large *square* of the town." (Addison)[4]	1899
A quadrilateral area, rectangular or nearly so, with buildings, or sites for buildings, on every side; also, an open space formed by the intersections of streets; hence, such an area planted with trees, shrubs, or grass, and open to the public for recreation or diversion, a public park among buildings; a common; a green; as, Union *Square* in Washington; Trafalgar *Square* in London.[5]	1904
An area of four sides with houses on each side or on at least three.[6]	1924
Quadrilateral area planted with trees, etc., or ornamentally laid out and surrounded with buildings, especially dwelling houses, as *Trafalgar Square, Russell Square, lives in the next square.*[7]	1931
An open area in a city or village, left between streets at their intersection or formed by their expansion.[8]	1958
An open area in a city or town formed by the intersection of four or more streets, often planted with trees and flowers, etc. and used as a park.[9]	1978

WALK

Year	Definition and Interpretation
1785	n. (among others) An avenue set with trees. "He hath left you all his *walks*, His private arbours, and new planted orchards, on that side of the Tiber". (Shakespeare, Julius Caesar). "Goodliest trees planted with *walks* and bow'rs." (Milton) Way; road; range; place of wandering. "The mountains are his *walks*, who wand'ring feeds on slowly-springing herbs." *(Sandy's Paraphrase)*[1]
1851	An avenue set with trees.[2]
1875	A place for walking, or the space or circuit through which one walks. An avenue set with trees or laid out in a grove or wood. "The forest walks are wide and spacious." (Shakespeare)[3]
1899	Length of way or circuit through which one walks; or a place for walking; as, a long *walk*; a short walk. The garden of the Tuileries and of the Luxembourg are very pleasant *walks*. *An avenue set with trees.*[4]

WALK

Definition and Interpretation	Year
A place laid out or set apart for walking; an avenue; a promenade. Specifically, (a) an avenue set with trees or laid out in a grove or wood; (b) grounds; a park; (c) a path in or as in a garden or street; (d) in public parks and the like, a place or way for retirement: as gentlemen's *walk*.[5]	**1904**
A place in which one is accustomed to walk; an avenue, promenade, or the like.[6]	**1924**
Person's favorite walking ground, round of hawker, etc., place or track intended or suitable for strollers or foot passengers, promenade, colonnade, footpath.[7]	**1931**
A place laid out or set apart for walking or resorted to by those who walk; a path, avenue, promenade or sidewalk for pedestrians.[8]	**1958**
A place set apart for walking; a path, promenade or sidewalk for pedestrians.[9]	**1978**

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The definition of many of the terms used to describe urban open space have changed over the years, especially since much of the terminology has its roots in the Renaissance in Europe and in Pre-Victorian Britain. On the other hand, some terms have changed only slightly in meaning. These terms are traced back to the original British **Dictionary of the English Language**, by Samuel Johnson (1785).

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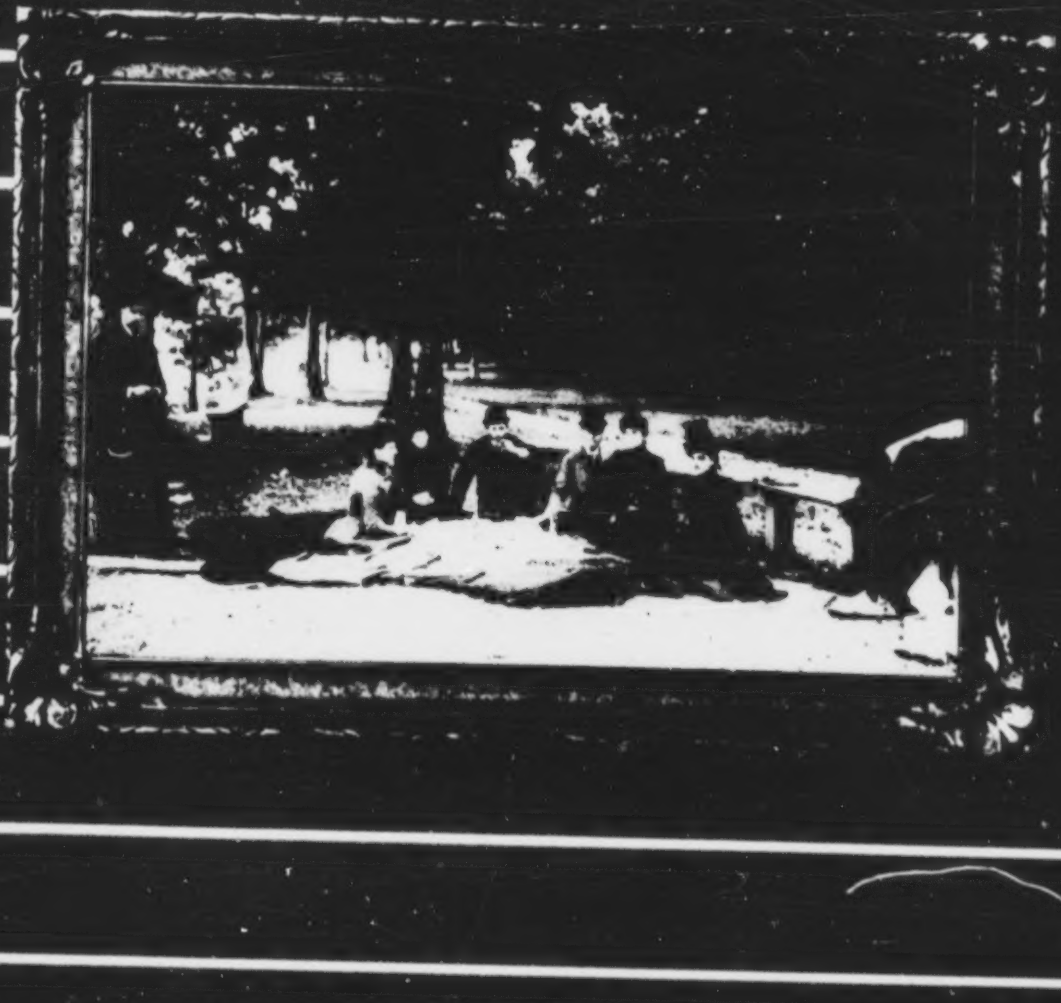
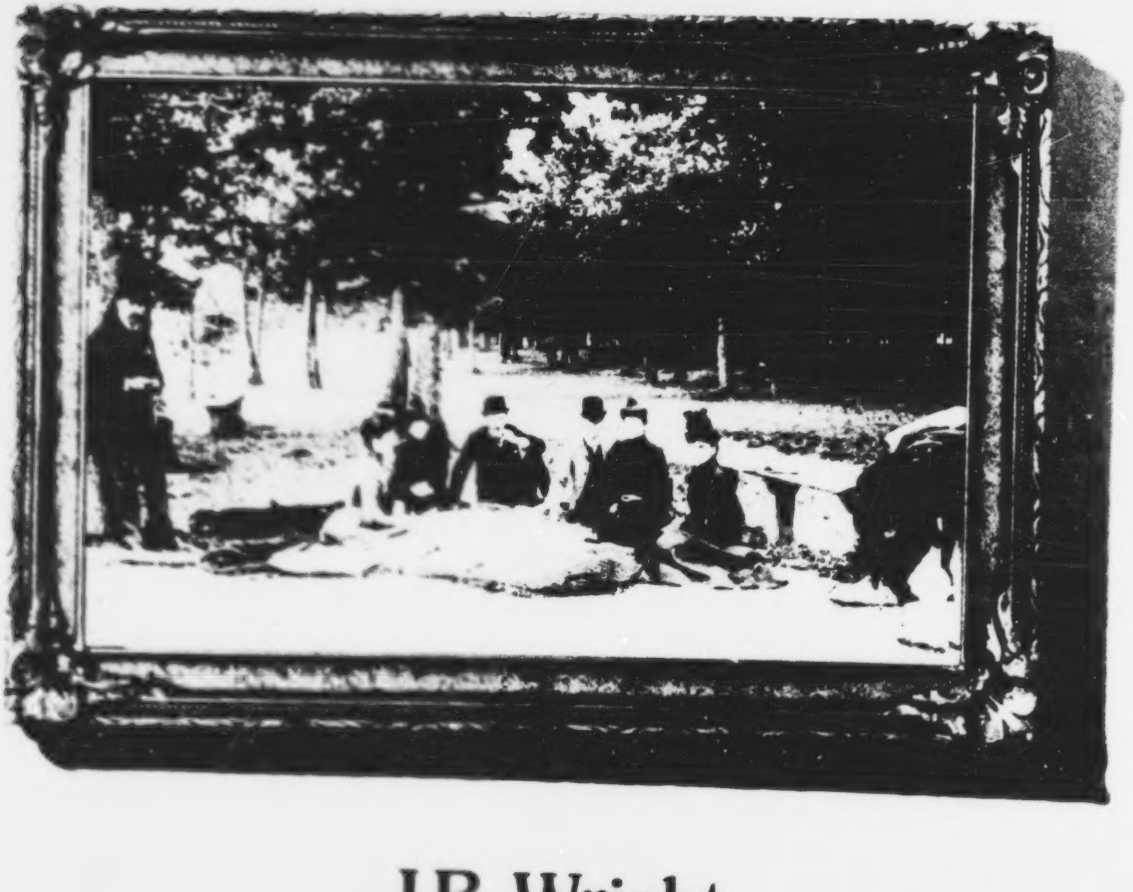


Urban Parks
IN ONTARIO
Part II: The Public Park Movement 1860-1914



J.R. Wright

URBAN PARKS IN ONTARIO

PART II: The Public Park Movement
1860-1914

J.R. Wright, Ph.D.
University of Ottawa

OTTAWA, CANADA
1984

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Front Cover Photo: Picnic in Scarborough Heights Park, 1875. Ontario Archives S12764.

PREFACE

This text covers the period 1860 to the advent of World War II, as a sequel to **Urban Parks In Ontario, Part I, Origins to 1860**. As in Part I, credit and appreciation is given to Charlene Lambert for her invaluable assistance as a research assistant in gathering data for this outline. Appreciation is also extended to Warner Layer, another former graduate Planning student at the University of Ottawa for his diligence in reviewing the Ontario provincial legislation of the period; to the Public Archives of Canada and the Ontario Archives for their cooperation in supplying many of the photographs used in this text; to the numerous individuals in various county and local historical societies and museums; to those individuals in various municipal park and recreation agencies who supplied pertinent information, particularly Margaret Thomson of Thunder Bay and Tom Clancy of Kitchener; to Luong Le Phan, of the Media Production Services of the University of Ottawa for his valuable assistance in the design and production hurdles of this text; to Linda Cooke of the Department of English, University of Ottawa for her excellent editorial advice, and of course to the **Ministry of Tourism and Recreation** in the provision of funds for the publication of the second of this three part Ontario series.

J.R.W.

How people have understood urban problems has shaped their ideas about what parks should accomplish for society, and their ideas have been realized in the favourite activities and forms of the urban park.

Galen Cranz

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1 INTRODUCTION

Parks with oak and chestnut shady
Parks and order'd gardens great.

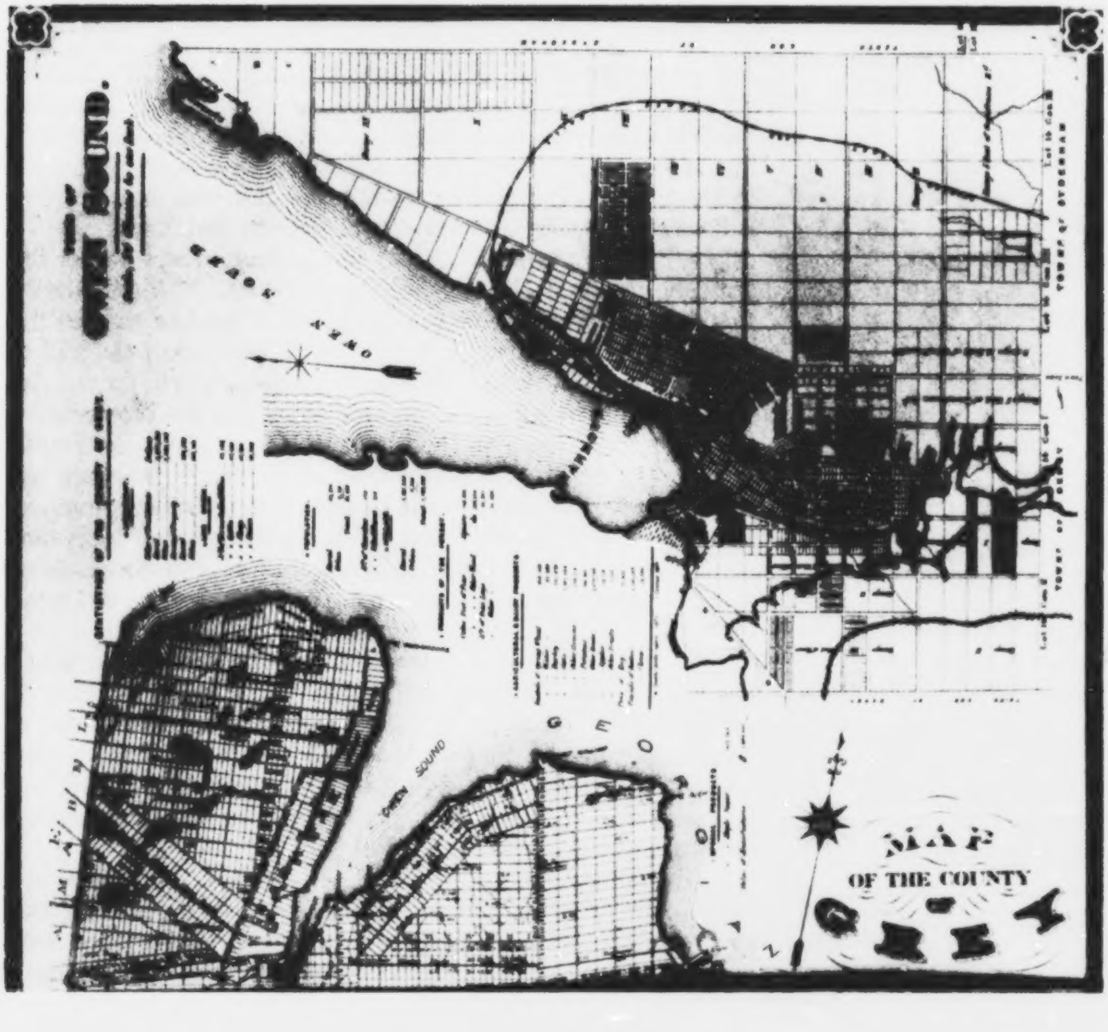
Tennyson

The first public urban parks in Ontario were established at the mid-point of the nineteenth century.[1] These parks were fully accessible to all of the inhabitants of the local municipality, and were financially supported by local government. There was no profound malaise or urgent urban crisis to precipitate these first parks as there had been in Britain. It was very simply an existing concept that was brought to the new country from Britain and applied under vastly different social conditions. The original public parks of Ontario satisfied a concept, rather than a reality, motivated by the altruism of the elite.[2] Despite the fact that these public parks were established at least as early as their counterparts in the much more heavily populated cities of the United States, the idea of public municipal parks in Ontario was slow to gain general public acceptance across the province until the years following The Public Parks Act of 1883. By the turn of the century the influence of what might be described as a public parks movement could be recognized. Indeed, the years between 1883 and 1914 saw, not only the general acceptance of the need for public recreational grounds, but also development of parks at a scale unequalled in relative terms in Canada until the post-World War II Years.

In the following chapters, the early park development in the period preceding the first Public Parks Act in 1883 is discussed as are the major developments that occured in the expansionist years of the Macdonald Government. The nature of park developments at the turn of the century is outlined, and, in conclusion, a summary and analysis of this fifty years of growth and development is presented.

The severe recession of 1913 in Canada, and the start of World War I marked the end of the initial period of the growth of the public parks movement in Canada. While there was a certain degree of activity in the post-World War I period, devel-

*Fig. 1.1 Owen Sound: map showing Reserve for Public Pleasure Ground, 1879.
Public Archives Canada/20842.*


OWEN SOUND.
OWEN SOUND
G E O
MAP
OF THE COUNTY
OF
GREY

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opment and growth came to a virtual standstill in the depression years and during World War II. It was not until the 1950's, a lapse of almost forty years, that major park development once again became commonplace. Part III of this series describes this latter, or modern period from 1914 to the present.

The period under discussion in this text (1860-1914) is one of great interest and significance in setting the stage for public recreation as we understand this term today. This was the period of romanticism, the period in which the newly-conceived urban parks were intended as places for exercise, instruction and psychic restoration. We tend to think of all public recreation activities in the parks of this period as having been passive. Not so. The recreation can be considered as having been unstructured and lacking in formal organization, but in many cases was quite active. The activities were organized by families and church groups, with, of course, considerable individual and small group participation. The parks in the larger cities, often referred to as pleasuring grounds, were used primarily in the summer evenings and on Sundays, but "ideally, people would spend an entire day in the park - with friends and books, watching squirrels and birds, listening to music, picnicking, playing croquet, boating, watching their children play," or simply walking or watching those in carriages or on horse-back, as well as watching one another.[3]

The recreational interests and activities of this period were similar in many respects to those of the earlier settlement period. The key difference was one of scale and increased opportunity for more persons to become involved in recreational pursuits in the growing towns and cities of Upper Canada.
But even by the turn of the nineteenth century, the *Century Dictionary* of 1904 still gave us the principal meaning of a park: "a tract of land inclosed . . . for wild beasts of chase," and secondly as:

> *considerable extent of pasture and woodlawn, surrounding or adjoining a country-house, and devoted primarily to purposes of recreation or enjoyment, and often serving a herd of cattle or a flock of sheep, or in Europe, stocked with deer.*

The third meaning recognized the recreational function of a park:

> *A piece of ground, usually of considerable extent, set apart and maintained for public use, and laid out in such a way as to afford pleasure to the eye as well as opportunity for open air recreation: as Central Park in New York or Hyde Park in London.*[4]

The use of the term public was intended to clearly differentiate between a private "*park*", and a public park. The term pleasure ground persisted for many years even after the term "*public park*" gained common usage. For example, Victoria Park in Owen Sound was originally set aside as a reserve for a public Pleasure Ground prior to 1879, and not officially turned over to the municipality until 1912. The term "pleasure ground" was in common usage in Owen Sound until after World War II (Fig. 1.1). The term "pleasure garden" was linked to the idea of health, as in the setting aside of Rockcliffe Park in Ottawa as a "*pleasure and health resort*" as recorded in the City of Ottawa's Finance Committee report of January 22, 1897.

But let us turn back to the period following the origin and establishment of the first public parks in Ontario in the mid-1850's. The first parks in Upper Canada, described in Part I of this series, were established in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Toronto, Kingston and Hamilton, with City Park in Kingston generally recognized as Ontario's first truly public park, owned, developed and managed by local government and open free to

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every citizen. Admittedly, there were public parks established in several Ontario municipalities in this same period, but these parks were, for the most part, established on former military or other federal holdings, and some years later were turned over to the local authorities. For example, the 15-acre Victoria Park site in Chatham was set aside as a public park by the Federal Government in 1850, but it "was finally and absolutely" transferred to the town some nineteen years later, on December 3, 1869.[5] This park is now used as the playing and athletic field for Chatham Collegiate Institute High School, as well as for the Victoria Home for Senior Citizens and Victoria Park School (Fig. 1.2). Tecumseh Park, also located in Chatham, was originally a military reserve established in 1795. Eighty-four years later (1879) this 11-acre parcel was turned over to the town on condition "that it should and shall be used exclusively as a Public Park."[6]

The setting aside of land for a public park was reported in **The Anglo-American Magazine** (1852) as an indication of the growing awareness of government and the public acceptance of the idea of land being set aside for public recreation purposes.

> *The Crown Land Department has set apart a block of land in the thriving village of Sydenham, C.W., for a public pleasure ground. Sincerely, we do trust that such an excellent precedent will be universally followed in time to come by the Provincial Government. Nothing more conduces to the health of civic communities than parks for exercise and recreation, and if the appropriation be not made at the commencement of a town the chances are great that the object will never be attained at any future period.*[7]

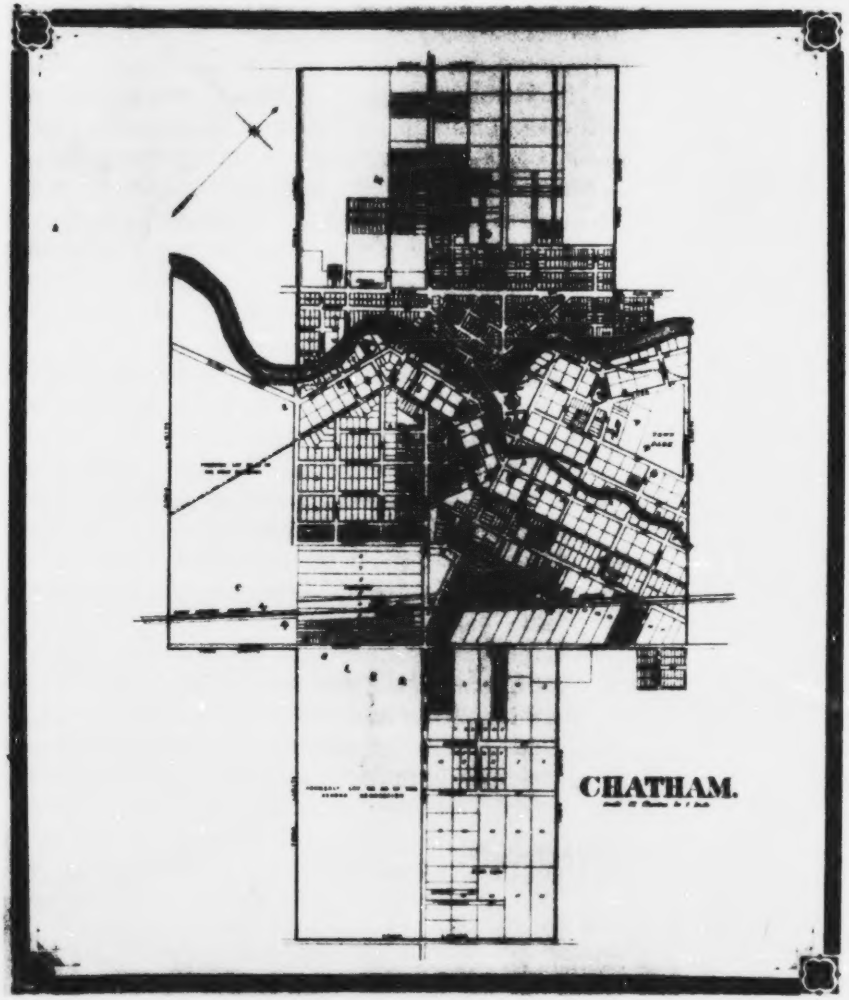
TOWN PARK
CHATHAM.

Fig. 1.2 Chatham showing early town park and military grounds, 1879. Public Archives Canada, 20839.

A search of the civic records for the period 1850 to 1860 failed to reveal any mention of this Crown Land dedication for a park. Perhaps the intentions of the Government were not enacted until a few decades later. It is assumed that the present Loughborough Memorial Centre Park on the river is the site under discussion.

The same issue of **The Anglo-American Magazine** provided another revealing editorial comment on the matter of public squares and similar spaces in the newly-developing Toronto.

> *The absence of large spaces, in the form of public squares, gardens and arrangements of a similar kind, is also remarkable, and very much to be regretted. In a city whose local disadvantages, as far as public health is concerned, have been made the subject of frequent comment, we opine that the wisest policy would be to make a sacrifice of present wealth, for the purpose of future good.*[8]

A broad overview of the major changes in Ontario in the years between 1852 and the advent of the First World War, will indicate how the stage was set for the period in which public parks emerged as an essential component of all major towns and cities of Ontario, primarily as a result of the recognition of the need for fresh air, trees, and greenery as a refuge and release from the hurried and noisy urban scene.

Ontario: Growth and Stabilization 1851-1914

In the second half of the nineteenth century Ontario saw a movement from a pre-occupation with subduing a wilderness to a consolidation of urban centres and industry, the development of a prospering agricultural sector, and the opening of northern Ontario through mining and forestry. Major transportation of goods shifted from the constraints of water movement to the freedom of the newly-constructed railroads, while roadways were both extended and greatly improved. The population of the province multiplied almost two and one-half times from 952,000 persons in 1851 to 2,527,292 persons in 1911. The urban population was beginning to concentrate at a few major points, with Toronto and Hamilton the leading growth centres, while other key towns and cities were actually declining. The period between 1881 and 1911 witnessed an urban population increase of 137 per cent, with Toronto leading the way. A review of the growth of selected cities in Upper and Lower Canada shows that Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton, Ottawa and London emerged as principal growth centres, while other centres such as Kingston, St. John, and Halifax, for example, grew at a much slower pace, as illustrated in Table 1.1.

There were profound changes in Ontario's growth in the thirty years between 1850 and 1880, due in large part, to the shift in transportation from water to rail. Whereas the key urban centres had been the ports, by 1880 the inland villages and towns assumed the key role as the major growth centres in the province because they were tied directly to the new network of railways. In this period, the rural landscape was cleared of forests to such an extent that a concern arose about the disappearance of the forest resources. The major change in the growth of urban centres in the 1850-1880 period occurred in the smaller centres. In 1851 only two centres could boast a population of 1,000 persons, but there were 26 such centres by 1881.

The spirit of capitalism ruled the day, and,

> *Whether they lived on a pioneer farm on the Shield or in a mansion on Jarvis Street in Toronto, the values of most Ontarians were essentially the same. Pioneer farmer and timber baron worked hard to*

> *achieve material success, were sensitive to economic pressures, and rarely considered the longer future.*[9]

TABLE 1.1
POPULATION OF SELECTED CANADIAN CITIES 1851-1911

Source: Statistics Canada

District	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**	**1891**	**1901**	**1911**
Halifax	—	25,026	29,582	36,100	38,556	40,832	46,619
St.John (N.B.)	22,745	27,317	28,805	26,127	39,179	40,711	42,511
Québec City	42,052	51,109	59,699	62,446	63,090	68,840	78,710
Montréal	57,715	80,323	107,225	140,747	182,695	203,078	203,078
Sherbrooke	4,266	5,899	4,432	7,227	10,170	11,765	16,405
Ottawa	7,760	14,669	21,545	17,412	37,269	57,640	87,062
Kingston	11,585	13,743	12,407	14,091	19,263	17,961	18,874
Toronto	30,775	44,821	56,092	86,415	144,023	156,098	381,833
Hamilton	14,112	19,096	26,716	35,961	47,245	56,634	81,969
London	7,035	11,555	15,826	19,746	22,281	24,415	46,300

The concept of public land set aside for recreational pursuits slowly gained acceptance in Ontario in the period leading up to Confederation, as the business community began to realize the economic advantages of pleasant park areas as they upgraded civic appearance in the competition to attract commerce and make a more liveable community. Families of the "better" classes continued to look to house and yard as the major source of many recreational activities (Fig. 1.3 and 1.4).

There was no set pattern of development, nor indeed what could be described as a public park movement, before the 1870's. The early parkland acquisitions tended to be reasonably large areas of land often at the edge of the "better" residential sectors of the towns and cities. But until the size of most

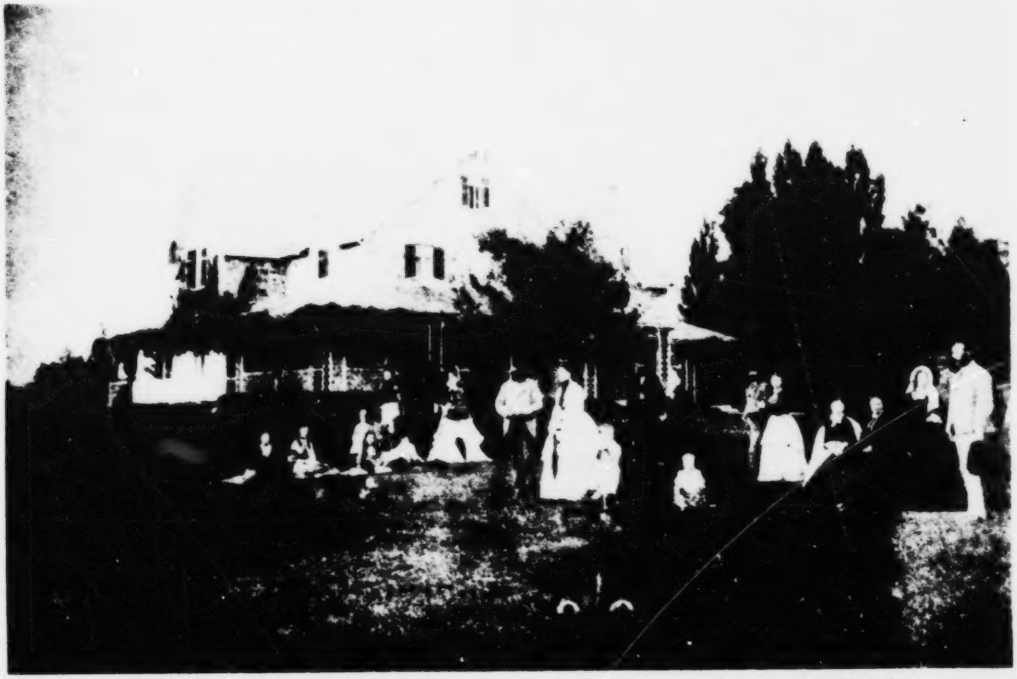

Fig. 1.3 Colonel Samuel Strickland house at Lakefield, Ontario, in the 1860's. Ontario Archives, S8365.

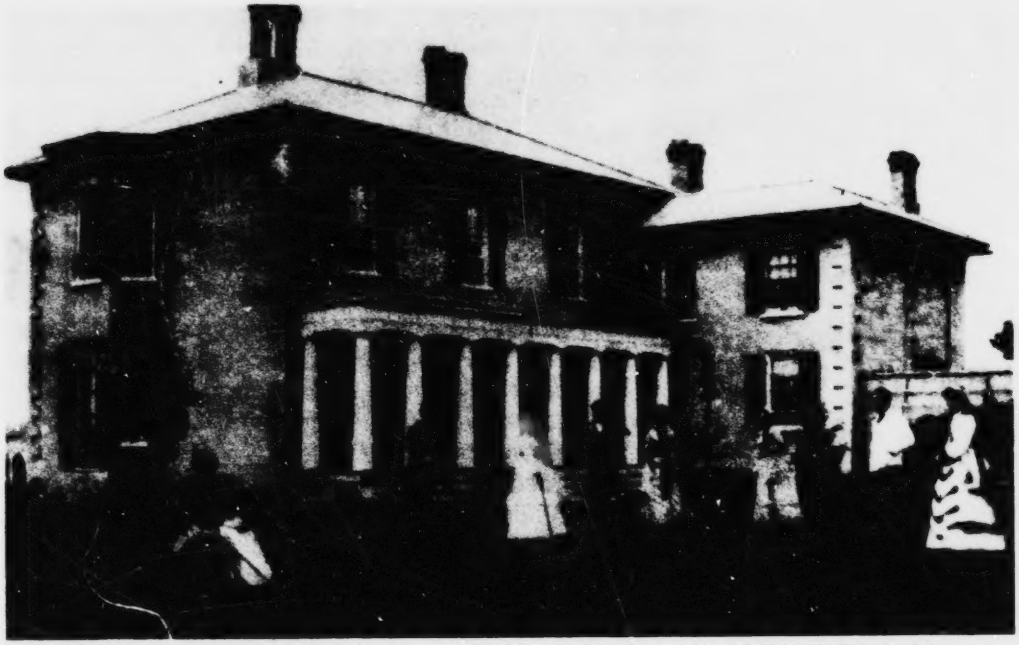

Fig. 1.4 Playing croquet at John Burnham's home. Peterborough, 1870's. Public Archives Canada/C29282.

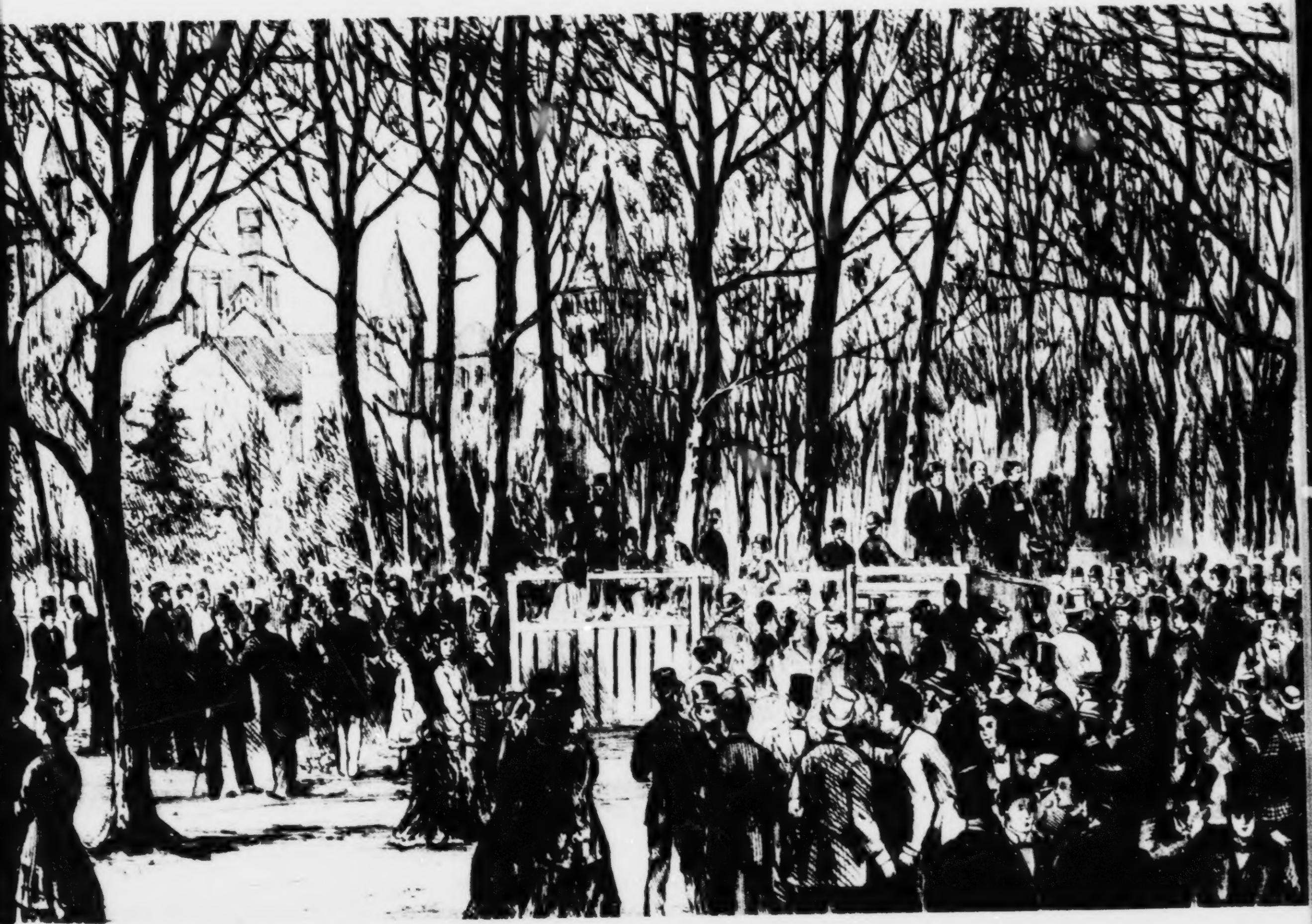

Fig. 1.5 Toronto - Preaching in the park, 1879. Public Archives Canada/C72136.

towns increased, or were viewed as having good growth potential, the impetus to dedicate lands for a non-productive function was not particularly strong. Certainly, the possibility of an attack from the Americans was a distant memory; the future appeared promising to most communities in southern Ontario, and, with no need to use tax dollars for defence, a reasonable alternative was the upgrading and beautification of the growing towns.

Manners and Morals

The term "modified Victorianism" can be applied to the character of daily life in the towns and cities of mid-nineteenth century Ontario. A central theme of Victorianism was the emphasis placed on morality and puritanism which has become a part of Ontario's history (Fig. 1.5). As Glazebrook observes, "There is, running through the history of Ontario, a stern puritanism that has been an essential part of the character of the Province. It is found in all periods and in all types of social circumstances: among rich and poor, in town and country."[10] Such morality was reflected in the manners and attitudes of the period:

> *Crimes of the day included highway robbery, pickpocketing and trying to enjoy yourself on Sunday, the day on which absolutely nothing was allowed. Ladies wore corsets under their hoopskirts and carried parasols to protect them from the sun. Gentlemen wore bowler hats, baggy pants and never took off their jackets in public. Respectable people were never seen walking the streets after 11:00 PM.*[11]

That the question of proper conduct, or propriety, was always a concern of this period, is indicated in this comment on unseemly behavior in City Park, printed in the Kingston Daily News of July 31, 1863:

> *City Park of late has become a place of resort for abandoned females, and it is alleged that on several occasions, ladies and nurses while walking in the grounds have had their delicacy outraged in open day by the lewd conduct of disreputable characters of both sexes . . . all known improper characters should be strictly excluded from the Park and the police should be instructed to devote a portion of their time and attention to the locality.*

One of the very early "Beauty Queen" contests was held at the Renfrew Agricultural Society's fair in 1887, the prize being six dollars worth of silverware "for the best-looking young lady from town or country on the Exhibition Grounds, judges to be known only to the officers of the Society." So startling was this idea to the prim and proper ladies in Renfrew that no young ladies entered the contest. To overcome this problem, the judge, a married man, simply kept a critical eye upon all the ladies for the day, and Miss Annie O'Connor was probably more surprised than any other when the announcement was made that she was the grand winner![12]

The sense of moral concern was of great importance in the thought leading to the first public parks in Britain and in New York (Central Park), and was also evident in the development of Canada's earliest public parks. Indeed, this puritanism remained one of the major factors in the events leading to the establishment of public parks in Ontario throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century, based in the belief that beauty of nature was paramount, and that beauty was innate in every human soul. It therefore followed that contact with nature brought refreshment and peacefulness to the mind and soul, and hence a moral uplifting to those exposed to the pastoral landscape of the public park.

Outline of Chapters

The first chapter links the origins of public parks in Ontario as described in **Urban Parks in Ontario Part I:** Origins to 1860 with the beginning of the public park movement in Ontario, with the next four chapters describing the fifty or so years preceding the World War I.

Chapter 2 focuses on the influence of the rural cemeteries on both horticulture and early park development, which in turn was followed by the formation of Horticultural Societies in Ontario as early as 1834. From the concern for the design and layout of gardens and parks grew the field of landscape architecture and its founding father in America, Frederick Law Olmsted, whose influence on the Canadian scene is discussed.

Chapter 3 outlines the events and circumstances surrounding the establishment of the first public parks in a selected number of Ontario towns and cities in the 1870's.

Chapter 4, entitled the Significant Decades, discusses the period in which the concerns for conservation of natural resources led to Canada's first national park and Ontario's first provincial park as well as legislation to protect Niagara Falls. It was in this period that Canada's first Public Park Act was passed by the Ontario Legislature in 1883. The establishment of the province's first Park Board in Port Arthur is discussed and contrasted to park development in its twin city, Fort William.

Chapter 5 describes the origins of the playground movement, the advent of amusement parks, using Britannia Beach in Ottawa as an example; the resort, cottage and steamboat "hey-days" as well as the contribution of one of Canada's first resident landscape architects, Frederick G. Todd of Montreal.

Chapter 6 provides a summary and draws a number of conclusions on the impact of public parks in the Province of Ontario, including a discussion of the function of the urban parks, the picturesque park systems, and the characteristics of early park development in Ontario.

NOTES

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1. The circumstances of the origins of these first public parks developed and supported at the local level are outlined in J.R. Wright, **Urban Parks in Ontario, Part I: Origins to 1860**, the first in a three part series.
2. Ibid., p. 84.
3. Galen Cranz, **The Politics of Park Design**, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachussetts, 1982, p. 10.
4. **The Century Dictionary, An Encyclopedia Lexicon of the English Language**, under superintendence of Wm. W. Whitney, The Century Co., New York, 1904.
5. Correspondence with Mrs. M.G. Cresy, Curator of the Chatham-Kent Museum, June 14, 1983.
6. Ibid.
7. **The Anglo-American Magazine**, Vol. 1, Toronto, July, 1852, p. 78.
8. Ibid., p. 4.
9. R. Cole Harris and John Warkentin, **Canada Before Confederation**, Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1974, p. 158.
10. G.P. De T. Glazebrook, **Life in Ontario: A Social History**, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1968, p. 207.
11. Linda Shapiro, Editor, **Yesterday's Toronto, 1870-1910**, Coles Publishing Co., Toronto, 1978, p. ix.
12. Harry J. Walker, **Renfrew And Its Fair**, Renfrew Agricultural Society, Renfrew, Ontario, 1953, p. 56.

2 EARLY INFLUENCES ON PARK DEVELOPMENT

Let science and the dignity of labour go hand in hand. By these powers we will convert our barren fields to beautiful farms, and reap rich harvests, which will not only attract the attention of the mere emigrant, but of the man of capital, taste, and education.

H.A. Engelhardt, 1871

This chapter outlines some of the key influences that led to the public park movement in Ontario. One of the influences of landscape enhancement was strongly evident in the early rural cemeteries adjacent to the larger urban centres, a precedent that was established on the eastern seaboard of the United States, and later in cities like Montreal and Toronto. This focus on landscape amenities, in turn, nurtured an interest in plant materials and the formation of horticultural societies throughout Ontario. From this milieu emerged key personalities and groups who helped influence the development of the early public parks leading to the public parks movement towards the close of the 19th century. One leading American personality emerged in the 1860's whose abilities and achievements had a profound influence on landscape design and development in the United States and Canada. Frederick Law Olmsted, raised in a rural environment, developed a deep and sensitive awareness of the land and of the need for nature in urban centers and, within his lifetime, was recognized as the father of landscape architecture in North America. His approach and principles of landscape design had an indirect but highly significant impact on the park movement in both Ontario and Canada. We now turn to the formative years in Canada, when the need for land set aside for recreational pursuits was scarcely recognized, let alone considered.

The public park movement in Canada, like that in Britain, had its roots in the concept of a public park as a retreat and refuge, an escape from the hurly-burly of the hectic life of the town and city. This movement was born in the 1840's and '50's in Ontario and flourished in the latter quarter of the 1800's as reflected in John Olmsted's 1897 statement of the purpose of public parks:

The true purpose of a large park is to provide for

> *the dwellers in cities convenient opportunity to enjoy beautiful natural scenery and to obtain occasional relief from nervous strain due to the excessive artificiality of urban living.*[1]

This prevailing attitude stemmed from values responsible for the origin and growth of public parks in Britain and from the preoccupation with agriculture and horticulture in the settlement of a new country. This interest began in the earliest days of colonization in New France (Quebec). "Jesuits and other missionary organizations, besides collecting native flora, introduced cultured European plant varieties in New France in an effort to encourage the development of agriculture among the native peoples and settlers."[2] This interest was also a reflection of the intense pre-occupation of Europeans with botanical materials "for horticultural, medicinal and culinary uses."[3] As early as 1747, the Swedish botanist Peter Kalm travelled widely in Canada and documented not only vegetation, but gardens and landscapes as well.[4]

To some degree, there is a dichotomy in the early Canadians' interest in horticulture, considering the rural attitudes to the forest in the early settlement period, as perceived in 1836 by Anna Jameson. "A Canadian settler hates a tree, regards it as his natural enemy, as something to be destroyed, eradicated, and annihilated by all and any means. The idea of useful or ornamental is seldom associated here even with the most magnificient timber trees —."[5] It must be assumed that the key area of difference was between the attitude towards the challenge of clearing land for farming purposes, and the desire to create a more pleasant environment in the growing towns and cities in a later period or the planting of trees for fruit production. In 1852 **The Anglo-American Magazine** made a plea on moral and ethical grounds for the growth and protection of native trees.

> *Let us then, make the attempt to induce our fellow-countrymen, while there is yet an opportunity, to set apart in each of our cities and towns, spacious grounds in which we may preserve specimens of our native woods, and cultivate those more ornate growths from other climes. By such means we may infuse our taste for noble and holy occupations, and win the thoughtless into better ways.*[6]

The shift in attitude towards ornamental trees is evidenced in **The Act To Encourage The Planting And Growing Of Trees**, passed by the Ontario Legislature in 1897, which, along with recommendations for uban streets, lanes and squares, included a section pertaining to highway tree planting. The interest in plant materials for consumption purposes was evident in the maritime provinces in the urban centres, with the Nova Scotia Horticultural Society being founded in the mid-1800's for the production, sale and viewing of plant materials.[7]

This widespread interest in the growing of plants is illustrated in the parellel development of the early "rural" cemeteries on the eastern seaboard and those in the largest cities of the period in Canada. These burying grounds served a recreational function, and evolved a concern for the need of large open spaces or rural retreats within cities and growing towns.

Influence of Rural Cemeteries

There is a strong link between the interest in horticulture and the development of early cemeteries in both the United States and Canada. The rural cemeteries are viewed as one of the early park-like public spaces, and, indeed, became one of the sources of public recreation grounds as towns and cities grew in size and pressure mounted for urban park lands. Entire families visited cemeteries on a Sunday as a recreational pursuit (Fig. 2.1).

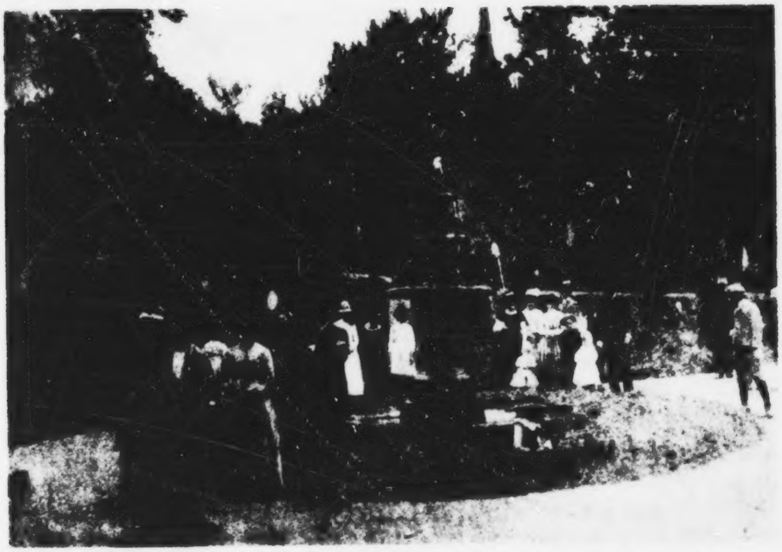

Fig. 2.1 Old Burying Ground, St. John, N.B., 1890. Public Archives Canada/C30991.

The development of the rural cemeteries, such as Boston's Mount Auburn in the United States, played a very important role in the evolution of public parks both in the United States and in Canada. The importance of these cemeteries, developed as early as 1831 as a prototype of the earliest public parks, is outlined in Part I of this series. Mount Auburn was originally developed as a public garden and cemetery situated four miles west of Boston and placed under the control of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. However, the idea of a combined public garden and burial ground was not a successful venture, and by 1835 the cemetery portion of Mount Auburn was separated from the gardens. This original garden-cemetery provided "an example of landscape or picturesque gardening in conformity to the modern style of laying out grounds."[8] Carriage ways and pedestrian paths provided easy access to the sylvan scenery.

Mount Auburn is representative of the first stage in the development of the modern cemetery, in the years between 1830 and 1855, when the garden type, or "rural" burying grounds dominated public taste. During this same period, "The development of the cemetery proceeded in tandem with the development of the profession of landscape architecture and the public parks movement."[9] Underlying these developments was the general view that the beauty of nature was essential to human nature and there was a concern for health and sanitation as primary considerations in the justification of both the rural cemeteries and public parks. The aesthetic concern originated in England, as a Romantic reaction to the formalized gardens of the aristocracies of an earlier period.[10] The names of the early cemeteries, Laurel Hill, Green-Wood, Greenmount and Spring Grove reflected the relationship with nature, a relationship which is maintained to this day in many urban cemeteries, such as Mount Pleasant Cemetery and Prospect Cemetery in Toronto. These grounds contain an outstanding collection of indigenous and exotic trees, labelled and identified for interested visitors.

The rural cemetery remained very popular in the United States until the mid 1860's. The same "Beautiful" style of the landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing was employed in the design of both cemeteries and public parks in the United States. This style was based on the design principles of the English Landscape School as they were adapted by Frederick Law Olmsted in the plan for Central Park.[11]

The Association of American Cemetery Superintendents was formed twelve years before the formation of the American Society of Landscape Architects. The Cemetery Association proceeded to change the title of their professional journal **Modern Cemetery** to **Park and Cemetery** because "the superintendents of our leading cemeteries have, for a long time, recognized the fact that the requirements for the cemetery, apart from the burial of the dead, are very largely those of the park."[12] The view that the most attractive cemeteries were those which were most park-like was reflected in the monumentless cemeteries that became popular between 1860 and 1920 in the United States and, in a later period, in Canada, particularly in the post World War II years.

In Canada, the cemetery played another role as well. Many of the public parks of today were originally cemeteries, and one of the early examples is Victoria Memorial Square in downtown Toronto. This two-acre parcel of land was set aside in 1794 by Lt.Governor Simcoe as a burial ground adjacent to the Garrison Reserve military holdings. It is recognized as the first military burial ground in Toronto, and was used as such until 1854. It was transferred to the Province of Ontario in 1856, then returned to the Federal Government in 1870 and maintained as a military burial ground until February of 1939 when the Department of National Defence (for one dollar) turned the site over to the City as a public park, with the condition that the City maintain the site and The War Memorial To The Fallen In The War of 1812.[13]

Macdonald Gardens, in the Sandy Hill district of Ottawa, was set aside by the military in 1844 as a cemetery and alloted in 4 equal parcels to the Church of England, the Roman Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian congregations. In the period between 1905 and 1911, the four parcels were, in turn, leased to the Ottawa Improvement Commission (now the National Capital Commission) for purposes of a public park and pleasure grounds. In later years (1967) the City of Ottawa entered into an agreement with the Commission to develop a playground on the site (Fig. 2.2).

Fig. 2.2 Ottawa, Macdonald Gardens - a former cemetery, 1983.

In smaller Ontario settlements, burial grounds have experienced a similar transformation. In 1879 an Act was passed by the Province of Ontario to allow a former burial ground in Guelph to be used as a public park, since no burials had taken place on the site for at least twenty-five years.[14] A similar Act passed in 1882 allowed the town of Wingham to sell or dispose of the "Old Burying Ground," or to set apart the said lands for a public park.[15] Cemetery Park in Kingston, originally the burial grounds of the Roman Catholic, the St. Georges' Anglican, and the St. Andrews' Presbyterian churches, was turned over to the City for "purposes of a public square" on May 27, 1893.[16] This park is still referred to as "Skeleton Park" by the long time residents of Kingston! Cemeteries were viewed in a revered light and treated with sacred respect in the 1800's, as exemplified by a letter in the **Belleville Intelligence** in April, 1872 on the question of the need for a non-denominational cemetery for the town. . .

> *Other towns are moving in the matter of public improvements: Picton will have a Cemetery: Port Hope is to have a beautiful Park, as well as a Cemetery, other towns of less pretensions than ours contemplate improvements of this kind, and shall Belleville be behind?*
>
> *It has been strange to see, that a community like Belleville, can endure the sight of their neglected churchyards, and never agree upon the cemetery question. . .*
>
> *There is nothing more creditable to a people than the proper care and adornment of the resting places of the dead. . .*[17]

The author of this letter was Henry A. Engelhardt, a German born landscape gardner who settled in Ontario in 1870, first arriving in Baltimore in 1851. Engelhardt quickly gained a reputation in the layout and design of institutional grounds and cemeteries. He was commissioned to design the Belleville Cemetery grounds in 1873, and as the **Intelligence** reported, "the architect has succeeded in a very short time in transforming a large portion of the cemetery grounds into a most delightful park-like spot."[18] Within several weeks of its completion, the cemetery was frequented by local citizens on Sunday afternoons.

Engelhardt was commissioned by the Toronto General Burying Grounds (the Toronto Trust) in the same year to design the newly purchased 200 acre site of Mount Pleasant Cemetery, then north of the city limits. The cemetery was opened for public burial purposes on November 1, 1876.[19] The respect and interest shown in cemetery grounds is indicated in this **Evening News** (1882) report,

> *Mount Pleasant is one of the finest combinations of natural scenery and the landscape gardeners art which can be found in the Dominion, and it is quite a moderate statement to say that when the plans of the company are brought to a termination Mount Pleasant will be one of the handsomest burying grounds in America.*[20]

Engelhardt served as Superintendent of Mount Pleasant Cemetery in the period between 1876 and 1888, a period in which he received recognition for his contribution to the enhancement of the grounds for both the living and the dead. In fact, such was the popularity of Mount Pleasant Cemetery as a "park", that the transit lines were extended north in the 70's to facilitate visitations to the grounds, particularly on Sundays.

This early interest in horticulture and the growing of plants is also illustrated in the origin and growth of Horticultural Societies in Ontario. The contribution of the Societies to the development of public parks in Ontario is recognized in the events leading to the establishment of Allan Gardens in Toronto, as well as of many other local parks in numerous Ontario municipalities.

Horticultural Societies

The Toronto Horticultural Society is the oldest surviving horticultural club in Ontario, having been organized on May 1, 1834, with a charter membership of 36 persons.[21] Today there are over 240 societies across Ontario, with a total membership of about 40,000 persons, a decline from the peak membership of over 80,000 in 1928 and 1929. The first Provincial Fair held in Toronto, later known as the Canadian National Exhibition, offered such prizes as Downing's books on **Landscape Gardening** and **Gardening for Ladies**.[22] By the early 1900's many Societies were active in street tree planting, park planting and general horticultural beautification and were taking over the maintenance of some parks, as they did in Belleville in 1912. The Kitchener Horticultural Society continues to maintain certain public park areas in that city. The Ontario Horticultural Society promoted vacant lot (allotment) gardens as well as schoolyard gardens as early as 1915 and, in the same year, endorsed a petition to the Ontario Government calling for a Town Planning Act.[23] The overall contribution of the Horticultural Societies has probably never been fully recognized, and, as the President of the Ontario Societies said at their annual meeting in 1927,

> *We have today a province that tourists admire for our well ordered, tidy rural districts, and for what it displays in the way of fine parks in our urban centres. Without the Horticultural Associations, Ontario could never have displayed so much beauty for the delight of the American tourists and the benefits of this province.*[24]

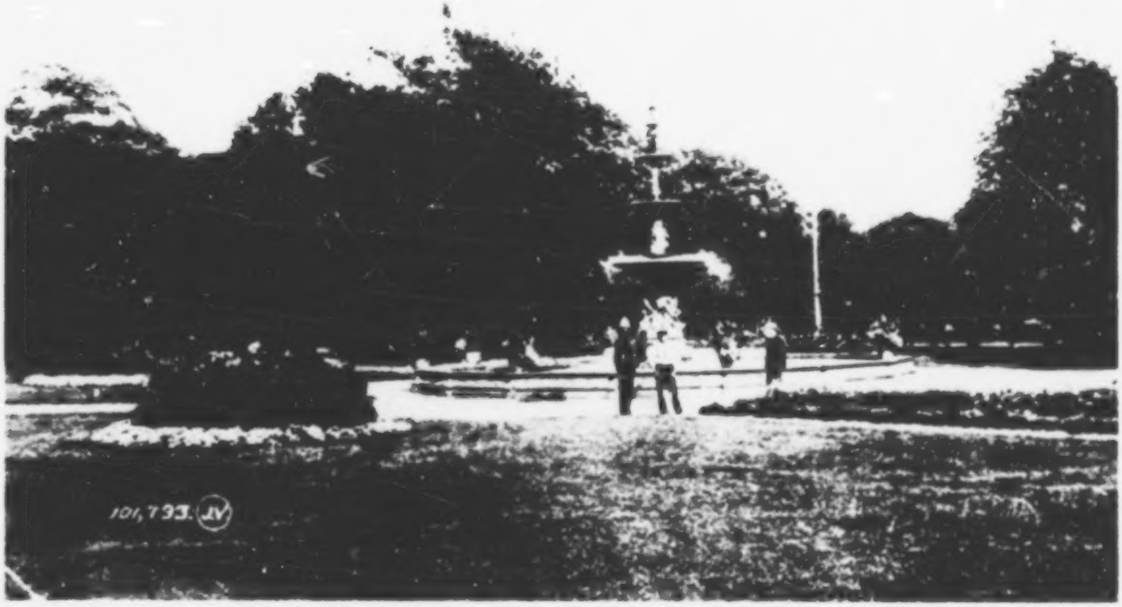

Fig. 2.3 Allan Gardens, Toronto, 1912 Ontario Archvies S 13012

The efforts of the various Societies should be recognized as significant in the promotion of public parks, particularly in the turn-of-the-century period. (This interest in horticulture was also evident in the original development of Halifax Gardens, and in the first public parks of St. John, New Brunswick and other maritime towns in the 1800-1880 period), and was strongly exemplified in the botanic gardens of Britain, and her colonies. Indeed, Chadwick states that, in England, the botanic garden could be considered "the forerunner of the public park".[25] While this statement does not hold true for Canada, there is no question that the general interest in horticulture played a strong role in the early stages of public park development in Ontario.

Allan Gardens

Allan Gardens, located at Gerrard and Sherbourne Streets in Toronto, owes its origin to the philanthropy of the Honourable George W. Allan, who was mayor of Toronto in 1855, a member of Canada's first Senate in 1867, and President of the Toronto Horticultural Society for 25 years. His father was the Honourable William Allan, a commissioner with the Canada Company in an earlier period. George Allan do-

Fig. 2.4 Josh Williams, self-appointed caretaker of Allan Gardens for over 20 years and never received a cent c. 1911. Ontario Archives/James 1293.

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nated the original 5 acres of land to the Toronto Horticultural Society and the site was officially opened on September 11, 1860 by the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) (Fig. 2.3). Four years later, the Society leased an additional 5 acres for a botanic garden, and in 1888, the Horticultural Gardens were handed over to the City (Fig. 2.4). In the same year, a large pavilion was built which was the only structure in the city sufficiently ample to host concerts, rallies and large public events, as well as many horticultural exhibitions (Fig. 2.5). Destroyed by fire in 1902, the pavilion was never replaced. The present conservatory was erected in 1909 and to-day is a fine example of a palm-house typical of that period. The site was re-named Allan Gardens in 1901 and continues to serve a sorely needed park function at the eastern edge of Toronto's urban core.

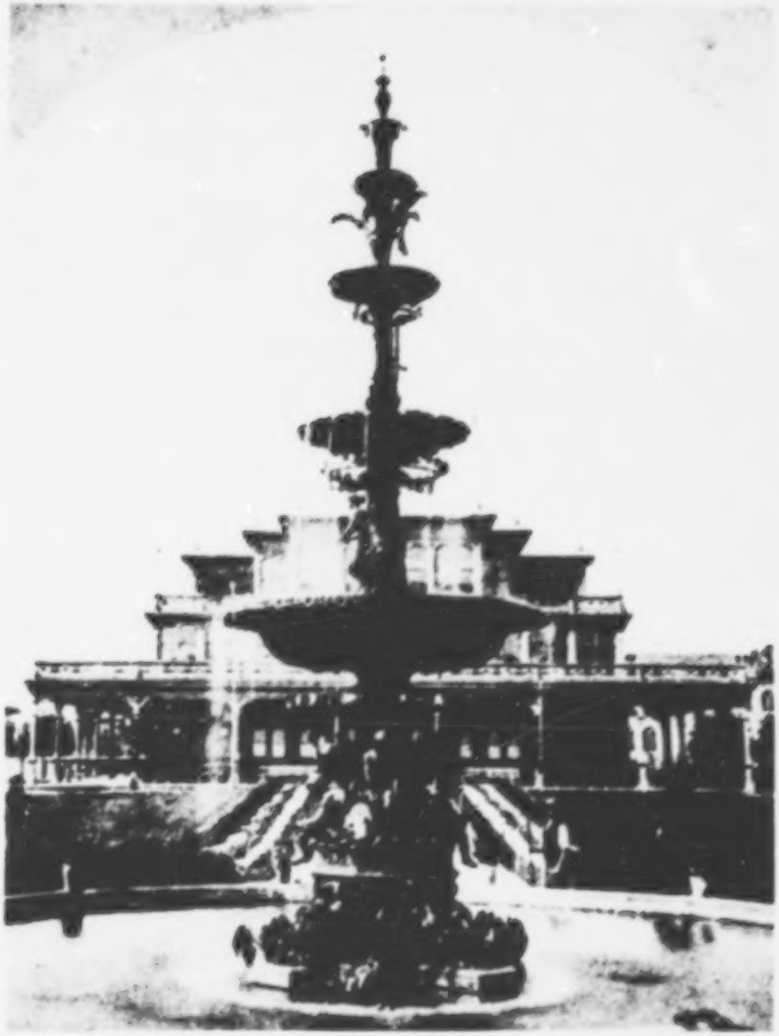

Fig. 2.5 Fountain and Pavillion, Allan Gardens, built in 1888, and destroyed by fire in 1902 c. 1890. Ontario Archives/ ST 108.

Origins of Landscape Architecture in America

It seems only natural that the great interest in land, agriculture, and specifically in gardens and horticulture in North America would stimulate individual creativity and innovation in many facets of these fields. One of the outstanding personalities to emerge at a crucial point in the development of the Americas was Frederick Law Olmsted, considered the father of the profession of Landscape Architecture. Olmsted was a remarkable personality, creative and innovative in his approach to landscape design, but, probably more important, he was able to influence others to recognize the desirability of aesthetic and

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functionally satisfying landscape development. His influence was widespread, affecting the approach to landscape design in both the United States and Canada. His story begins with the establishment of Central Park in New York, the first large site in the U.S. set aside solely for public recreational purposes.

Central Park

By 1850 the basic settlement pattern east of the Mississippi River in the United States had been established, and New York had grown to a population of over 517,000. With the growth of the other major cities of the eastern states, such as Boston, Baltimore and Chicago, there was concern about urban congestion in these larger centres, but at this point public parks had not been established in any American city in response to the recreational needs of the general public.

Certain pressures had arisen throughout the 1840's for the establishment of public park lands, such as William Cullen Bryant's editorials in the **New York Evening Post** which repeatedly expressed a concern that, if action was not taken to set aside land for extensive pleasuring grounds, all of Manhattan Island would be shortly covered with brick aand mortar. He was also concerned about the "corrupt atmosphere generated in that hot and crowded streets" of New York.[26] Another well-known and respected figure of the period, Andrew Jackson Downing, a landscape designer of country gardens and the estates of the wealthy and influential[27] held up, as did Bryant, the parks of London as the models New York and other American cities should follow.

These pressures, along with a recognition of the importance of parkland by the leading civic politicians of New York, led to the first legislation in the United States which set aside for recreation purposes, public land primarily under local jurisdiction and management. The legislature of the State of New York authorized the purchase of land for Central Park on July 11, 1851.[28]

Frederick Law Olmsted

Frederick Law Olmsted, born in the rural environs of Hartford, Connecticut (1822-1903) had been involved in scientific farming and was widely known for works on agriculture and for a series of articles on the social conditions in the southern slave states. His varied travels had included visits to Birkenhead in Liverpool and to other English parks. He had sought out the position and was selected as the Superintendent of the newly-acquired site for Central Park in New York in 1857. It was in this position, that, in partnership with the architect Calvert Vaux, he entered a competition sponsored by the Board of Commissioners for the design of the park.[29] His career as a landscape architect began in 1858 with the award of the best entry, known as the "Greensward" Plan. Following his selection, Olmsted was appointed as Architect-in-Chief, and soon 2,500 men were at work constructing the park.[30]

The "Greensward" plan provided for separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, boundary (or edge) plantings as a visual and sound barrier, vistas and views of the natural landscape, a grand mall for walking and meeting people, winding carriage ways, bridle trails, pedestrian walkways, a parade ground for military training, playgrounds, lakes for winter and summer use, flower gardens and a botanic garden.[31] Such a comprehensive plan was totally innovative in North America and was "unprecedented as a type of public reservation."[32] This plan is still considered a great park plan, as it met all the requirements of the day, particularly within the context of a great, expanding city and continues to meet the needs of the current population (Fig. 2.6).

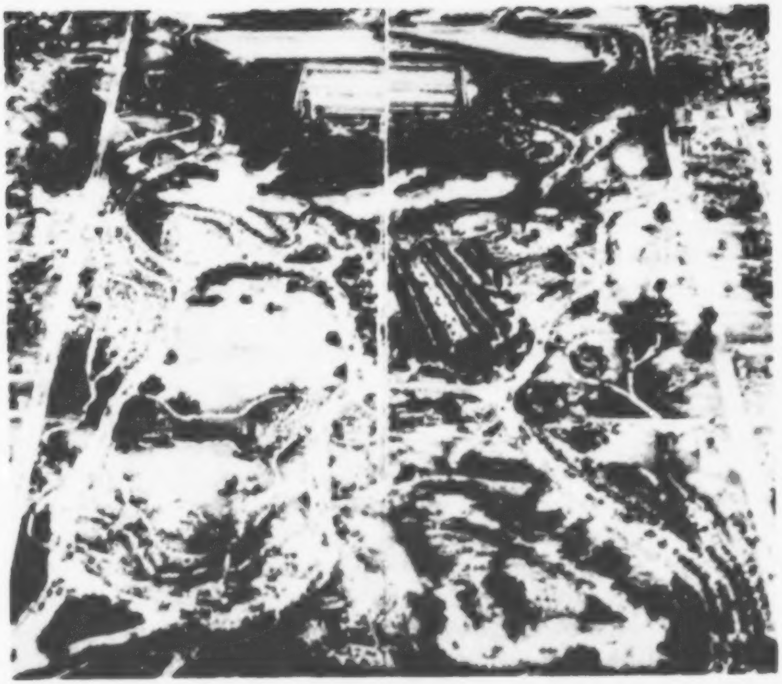

Fig. 2.6 Central Park, New York. c. 1975. (source unknown).

A perusal of the various reports and letters in which Olmsted and Vaux discussed their plan shows that the rural character of the site was to be protected above all else and that the architectural and engineering features were to be subordinate to the natural characteristics of the site. Indeed, this natural theme was of such importance in the basic concept of the park that Olmsted considered adopting the term "rural embellisher" to describe his professional skills, before deciding upon the term "landscape architect."

In 1863, Olmsted and Vaux resigned from the Parks Board in New York and entered into a partnership as consulting landscape architects in Boston. Their reputation was well established, and their commissions included work in many parts of the country. Olmsted was soon recognized as the foremost landscape architect in the United States, and his services were also sought in Canada. His contributions to the field of park planning and design were of major importance and had a profound effect on the nature and design of many public parks in Canada as well. Olmsted's major contributions to open space planning can be summarized as follows:[33]

- large "rural" type urban parks providing a wide range of recreational opportunities,
- large multi-use "rural" type urban parks, designed in series with other park areas, such as Prospect Park in Boston;
- heavily forested areas, set aside primarily for conservation, but with a recreational function, such as Lynn Woods, Lynn, Massachusetts;
- the parkway and boulevard as scenic, linear, open spaces, as in Boston;
- neighbourhood parks to meet local needs, such as Riverside Park in New York City;
- specialized open spaces, such as the Arnold Arboretum in Boston, or the Columbian Exposition in Chicago;
- the siting of public buildings;
- and the siting of private residences.

Olmsted's view on the meaning and purpose of a public park are outlined in a speech he gave in 1880 in which he stated:

> *That other objects than the cultivation of beauty of natural scenery may be associated with it economically, in a park, I am not disposed to deny; but that all other objects should be held strictly subordinate to that, in order to justify, the purchase and holdings of these large properties . . . cannot be successfully disputed.*[34]

Olmsted viewed the public park as a "countervailing force to improve the urban environment."[35] Perhaps Olmsted's greatest contribution was his concept of physical planning as a function of social planning. Such a view sprang from his having been a social critic and theorist before he began his ventures as a landscape architect at the age of thirty-five. In his endeavours he always recognized social needs, an approach that is too often over-looked in the design professions in contemporary society. The public park was seen as the centre of a new community, and as being important to the underprivileged housed in squalid tenements. Recreation was perceived to be a modifier of anti-social behaviour, and the park was seen as a unifying institution, as "a catalyst in the recreation of a homogenous democratic culture."[36]

Central Park, as a concept, and particularly in physical form, was viewed as "one of those rare institutions embodying the spirit of a society: its utopian goals, specific social needs, and form of expression."[37] The politically-powerful social elite hoped that "the future environment of the nation could be planned to reflect the idealism of their own generation. Olmsted became their spokesman as planner."[38]

Landscape Design

The principle of site specific urban landscape design developed by Olmsted was based on the belief that the preservation

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of the pastoral landscape was the most appropriate way to provide a change of environment from the man-made city streets and structures. This approach was rooted in the recognition of pure wilderness as the antithesis of urban form.

Olmsted's concept of the landscape was rooted in the belief, long prevalent in Britain, that nature should be beautiful and picturesque, and that this ideal could be achieved through man's manipulation of nature as improvement on true wilderness. In this romantic attitude, supported by such major figures as the landscape architects Eliot and Hubbard, improved landscape was viewed as a means of "refining, elevating, and affording enjoyment to the people at large."[39]

These values were expressed in all of Olmsteds works, as follows:

- woods opened and closed around meadows,
- a tendency to homogenity in tree form to avoid interest in any one tree or differing species,
- grass-defined meadows to link the various use areas of the site,
- large quiet bodies of water were seen as analogous to pastoral fields,
- certain vantage points allowed a sense of melding of sky and field to imply infinity, in sharp contrast to the finite urban street-grid,
- flowers were permitted in large natural beds of one species, or in decorative beds around buildings,
- buildings were kept to a minimum,
- pergolas and bandstands were light, airy structures with peaked or lattice-like roofs,
- circulation paths were seldom straight, being curved as a contrast to city streets,

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- pedestrian and vehicular traffic were separated.
- various use areas were clearly defined to meet certain functional needs and avoid conflict in recreational activities.

Olmsted's Influence in Canada

Frederick Law Olmsted influenced park development in Canada in many ways. He was directly involved in the design and layout of Mount Royal Park in Montreal, and he is also recognized as one of four persons who were responsible for the conception of the Niagara Falls park and preservation scheme.[40] However, his major contribution has been of an indirect nature, arising from his guiding philosophy of the nature of parks, as supporting "simultaneously a direct social function and a more subtle spiritual purpose."[41] The approach taken by Olmsted in the design of Mount Royal in Montreal is presented in some detail to illustrate the basic landscape principles developed by Olmsted which are still fundamental to today's practice of landscape architecture.

Mount Royal Park

In 1850, the present site of Mount Royal Park in Montreal was privately owned, was distant from the heart of the City, and was not recognized as a potentially valuable public utility. In fact, in that early period when a certain Dr. Alexander, with strong support from Mayor Wolfred Nelson, recommended that the land be purchased for public park purposes, little interest was shown in such an idea. This led to the preparation of plans for a scenic roadway to the top of the mountain in 1858, but Council turned down the idea and the plan never materialized.[42] City Council refused an offer of a donation of 12 acres of mountain-top land for a public park in 1861 because the land was virtually inaccessible to the residents of the City.[43]

However, Captain A.A. Stevenson, a member of Montreal City Council, drew attention to the potential of the site for a public park in a most conspicuous manner. The good Captain, as a salute to the Prince of Wales on his birthday, had the gun crew of the local militia drag their gun to the mountain top and fire a mid-day salute of 100 rounds in 15 minutes. This action clearly demonstrated the myth of the inaccessibility of the mountain top and resulted in a serious public concern as to the feasibility of the purchase of this land.[44] A series of Council actions led in 1864 to the appointment of a special committee which had a plan prepared for a public park on the top and slopes of the mountain, designating almost 522 acres for the site.

Council shelved the plan, but the issue was the source of on-going public discussion that, in 1872, led to the appointment of commissioners to evaluate the property in question. This action resulted in the purchase of 380 acres between 1872 and 1875. By 1876, the total cost of settlements for the expropriated lands amounted to $789,422.[45] To provide leadership for the development of the new park, City Council created a "Bureau de Commissaires" in 1874, comprised of three appointed commissioners. In that same year, the commissioners travelled to the nearby major cities of the United States, including New York and its Central Park, and, as a result, engaged Frederick Law Olmsted to provide professional advice in the design of Mount Royal.

In 1874 the Board of Park Commissioners approached Olmsted to draw up a master plan for Mount Royal Park. Olmsted's initial reaction was to refuse the assignment "because of diffidence in his ability to do justice to so unusual a problem without living for years upon the ground, and personally watching the development of its singular opportunities,"[46] but he eventually accepted the commission and presented his plan in 1877. Olmsted was commissioned to lay out a site of 550 acres, as designated on his initial design submission in 1877, but three major parcels of land had not been acquired by the Montreal City Council, a lapse which dramatically affected the site plan in terms of carriage roads and foot paths. This was one of a series of incidents "which reveal the general lack of business courtesy and cooperation extended to Olmsted in Montreal."[47]

In the preparation and modification of his plan, Olmsted was faced with a continuing professional conflict with the park commissioners. It was quite evident that "Olmsted's sense of futility in attempting to design a Mount Royal Park resulted from the modernism of his architectural philosophy and method which was to remain unacknowledged by Montreal Park commissioners of the period."[48] This led to the publication of an eighty-page report outlining the rationale of a park plan which emphasized the attributes of the natural environment of the site while accommodating large groups of people, and which recommended the use of natural plant materials, warning Council to avoid "the wasteful temptation to introduce flower beds, flowering shrubs, and floral embroidery under the delusion these were the required proper furniture for a public park."[49] Olmsted's philosophy, embodied in his Greensward plan for Central Park, promoted the protection and enhancement of a rural landscape in the form of a public park which uld function as a.place of escape and relief from and contrast to the busy and noisy urban scene (Fig. 2.7). Olmsted felt that the unique character of the park should be derived from its mountain environment; even though it had an elevation of only 763 feet, it stood out in relation to the surrounding river valley. Vegetation was to provide the unifying element of the design, with trees and shrubs associated with milder climates to be planted on the

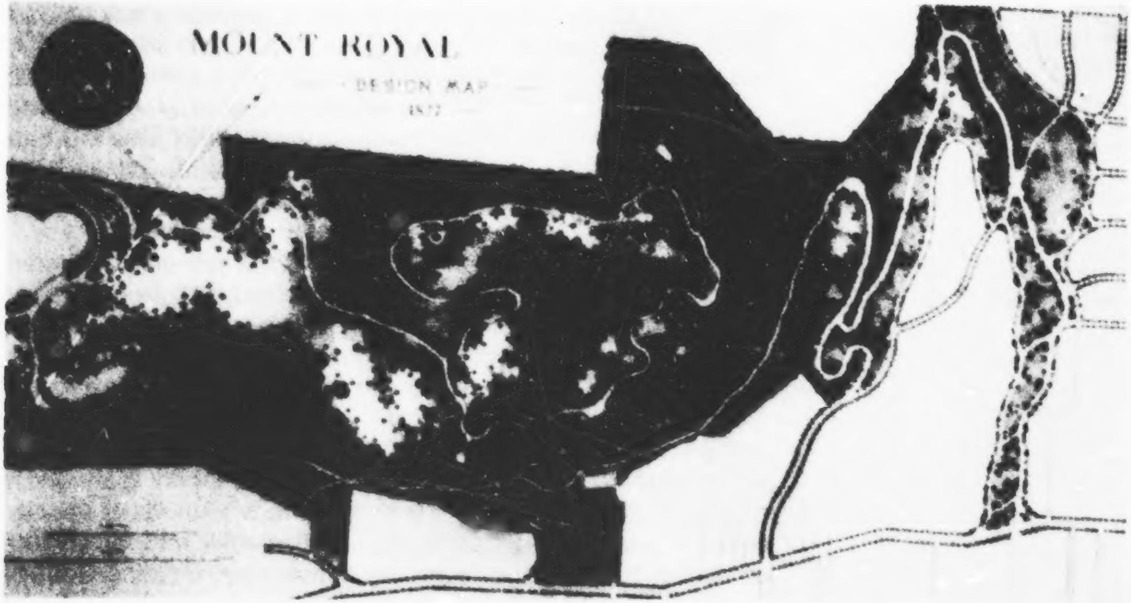

Fig. 2.7 Mount Royal Park, Montreal. Olmsted's Plan in 1877.

lower slopes and scrubby pines and firs on the exposed, higher outcrops. Variety in the design was to be achieved by exploiting the potential of the eight topographical regions identified by Olmsted. The analysis of the potential of the site preceded the consideration of the recreational activities to be permitted and the designation of roads and pathways throughout the park (Fig. 2.8). The circulation system provided a feeling of gradual increase in altitude by winding and switching upwards, with access to the peaks only possible on foot, with vehicular traffic

Fig. 2.8 Mount Royal Park, Winter skiing 1904. Public Archvies Canada/ C 34079.

separated from pedestrian movement, and with the roadways defining the eight regions of the park.[50]

Unfortunately, several key features of Olmsted's plan were not carried out. For example, the proposed lake was not built until 1934 when it became a make-work, depression project. The chalet and the lookout were built as relief programs as well, and neither were part of the original plan. Other intrusions include the inclined railways and a large cross.[51] As Olmsted stated in 1881, "... it is not to be denied that you cheated yourselves when you bought the mountain for a park unless you were prepared to have it managed on principles applicable to Works of Art."[52]

Olmsted's approach to landscape design was adapted from the English Landscape School and was widely accepted by other landscape architects of his day. Indeed, such was the public acceptance of Olmsted's ideas, that, as Chadwick states, "Olmsted's style ... is entrenched in public park design to-day."[53]

Summary

There were several major factors that influenced park development in the early settlement period in Upper Canada. The interest in horticulture played a role in early park development through the Horticultural Societies across the province, as did the rural cemetery as a fore-runner of the public park. It was also in this early period (mid 1800's) that the profession of landscape architecture was brought into prominence through the work of Frederick Law Olmsted in Central Park, New York.

It was from these early influences that the public park movement was shaped and arose, so that, by the 1870's, the public park was increasingly recognized as an important element in the growth of the towns and cities of Ontario.

NOTES

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2. John Stewart, "Canada's Landscape Heritage" in **Landscape Planning**, 6 (1979), Elsevier Publishing Co., Amsterdam, p. 208.
3. Ibid., p. 208.
4. Ibid., p. 208.
5. Anna Jameson, **Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada**, 1836-1837, McLelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1923, p. 72.
6. "A Plea for Parks," **The Anglo-American Magazine**, Vol. I, No. 2, Toronto, August 1852, p. 156.
7. See J.R. Wright, **Urban Parks in Ontario Part 1. Origins to 1860**, p. 55, on origins of Halifax Gardens as a public park.
8. James J. Farrell, **Inventing The American Way of Death 1830-1920**, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1980, p. 103.
9. Ibid., p. 99.
10. Ibid., p. 111.
11. A detailed outline of Central Park and F.L. Olmsted is provided in the next section of this chapter.
12. Farrell, p. 117.
13. **Brief History of Victoria Memorial Square**, Department of National Defence, Ottawa, Feb. 25, 1964.
14. This former cemetery was laid down in the original plan of Guelph by the Canada Company, and was bordered by Wyndham, Québec, Yarmouth and Woolwich Streets. **The Act respecting the Public Burying Ground in the Town of Guelph**, was assented to by the Province of Ontario on March 11, 1879.

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15. **An Act respecting the Old Burying Ground of the Town of Wingham**, Province of Ontario, March 10, 1882.
16. **An Act respecting certain Burying Grounds in the City of Kingston**, Statutes of Ontario, May 17, 1893.
17. Pleasance Crawford "H.A. Engelhardt (1830-1897) Landscape Designer," **Landscape Architectural Review**, Vol. 5, No. 2, July, 1984, p. 34.
18. Ibid., p. 36.
19. Ibid., p. 37.
20. Ibid.
21. Philip F. Dodds and H.E. Markle, **The Story of Ontario Horticultural Societies**, Gazette Publishing Company (1971), Picton, Ontario, 1973, p. 18.
22. Ibid., p. 27.
23. Ibid., p. 45.
24. Ibid., p. 81.
25. G.F. Chadwick, **The Park and the Town**, The Architectural Press, London, England, 1966, p. 95.
26. F.L. Olmsted and T. Kimball, editors, **Forty Years of Landscape Architecture: Central Park**, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1973, p. 23.
27. See **Urban Parks in Ontario, Part I** of this series, for more information on Downing.
28. The land acquisition of an eventual 770 acres for Central Park began in 1853, with an eventual expenditure for land of over $5 million dollars. In 1857 control of the park was taken away from the mayor and city government by the State Legislature and vested in a wholly independent Commission.
29. Norman T. Newton, **Design on the Land**, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1971, p. 270.

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30. Ibid., p. 273.
31. George Tobey Jr., **A History of Landscape Architecture, The Relationship of People to Environment**, American Elsevier Publishing Company, New York, 1973, p. 163.
32. Newton, p. 275.
33. Albert Fein, **Frederick Law Olmsted and The American Environmental Tradition**, George Braziller, Inc., New York, pp. 30-31.
34. F.L. Olmsted, **A Consideration of The Justifying Value of A Public Park**, Tolman and White, Boston, 1881, p. 20.
35. Fein., p. 32.
36. Ibid., p. 9.
37. Ibid., p. 9.
38. Ibid., p. 9.
39. George Tobey Jr., **A History of Landscape Architecture, The Relationship of People To Environment**, American, Elsevier Publishing Co. Inc., New York, 1973, p. xi.
40. Donald L. Way, **Ontario's Niagara Parks, A History**, The Niagara Parks Commission, Niagara Falls, Ontario, 1960, p. 14.
41. David Bellman, "Mount Royal Montreal," **in Journal Landscape Architecture Canada**, Vol. 3, No. 4, December 1977, p. 7.
42. File, "Parcs et terrains de jeux, Mont-Royal, Historique," Archives Municipales de Montréal.
43. Elsie M. McFarland, **Development of Public Recreation in Canada**, Canadian Parks/Recreation Association, Toronto, 1978, p.10.
44. Ibid., p. 10.

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45. "Combien la Cité de Montréal a-t-elle dépensé d'argent pour l'expropriation de Parc Mont-Royal?" **Courrier Historique**, Montréal, March 17, 1938.
46. McFarland, p. 10.
47. Bellman, p. 12.
48. McFarland, p. 10.
49. Bellman, p. 13.
50. Report submitted by F.L. Olmsted outlining the plans for the park, Mount Royal Montreal, 1881.
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3 THE GROWING PARK MOVEMENT

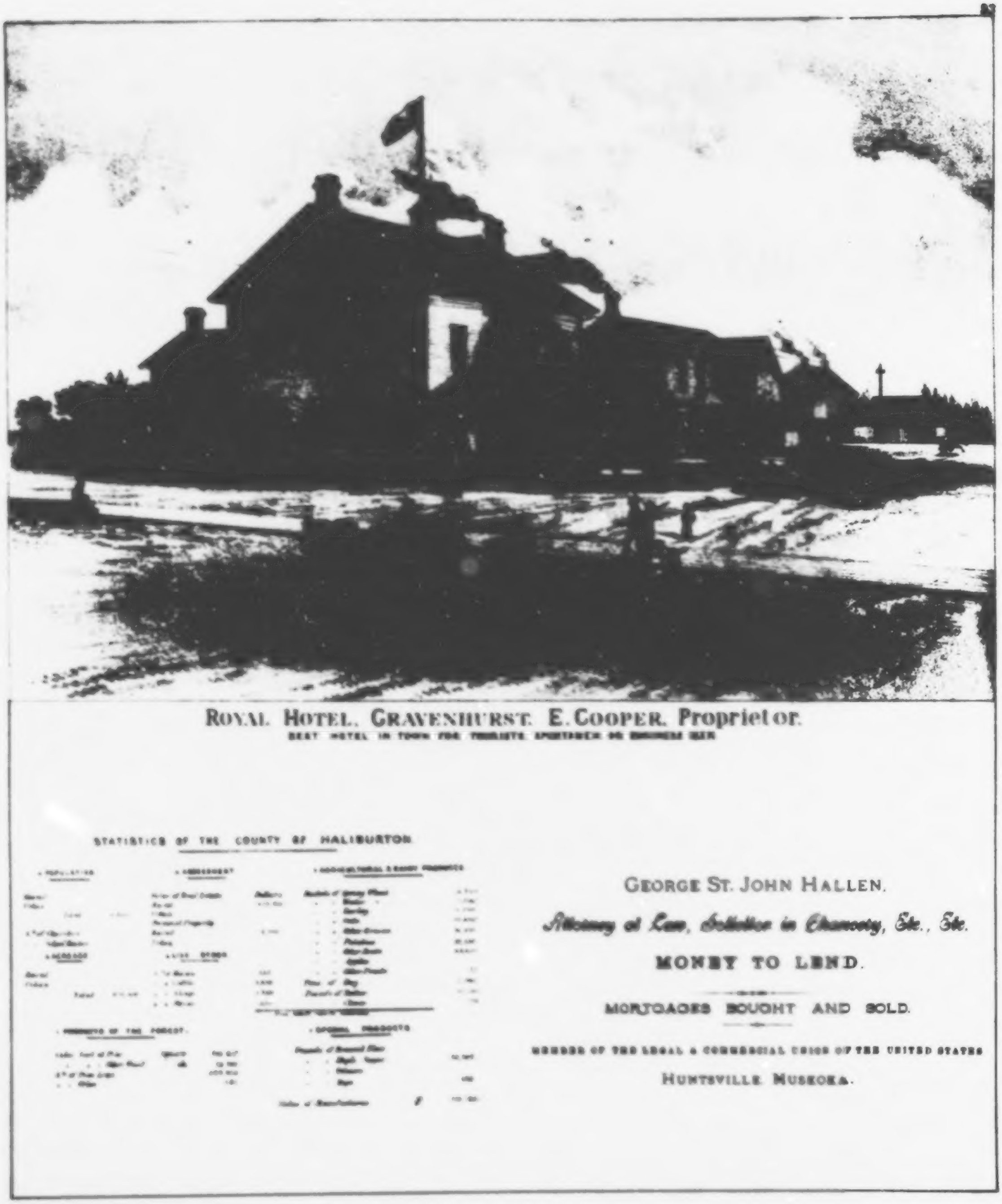
In the growth of taste, no educator of the people has been more valuable than the parks.;

C.M. Robinson, 1907

A social movement is characterized by a definable leadership, the employment of a well-defined communication systems, the sharing of a common goal, ideology or program and a collective attempt to pressure the body politic or responsible level of government. Often such a movement is loosely structured, with no formalized organization and is, in effect, a network, often described as a groundswell.

When the public parks movement began in Ontario is a moot point. Indeed, it is not really evident that there was a definable leadership, or that there was a general ground swell to pressure the provincial government to recognize the necessity of establishing local parks. Certainly, the original public parks in Kingston, Toronto and Hamilton were set aside under circumstances that could hardly be described as having resulted from a 'movement.' In the 1860's there was little evidence of a concern for public open spaces in the emerging towns of Upper Canada (Fig. 3.1). While some town halls or market squares might be set in an open area, and some towns had public parks, as Glazebrook states "these were usually too small, and on the whole these cities were badly off for open spaces to allow for fresh air, clumps of trees, and games. Perhaps the people of Ontario were too accustomed to great stretches of open country to think of a need to rescue parts of it while that was still possible."[1]

However, with the growth of towns and cities in the strong economic climate of Ontario in the 1870's, the push for public parks evoked and stimulated considerable public controversy at the local level. Perhaps a general consensus quietly emerged across the province, and the pros and cons of public parks at the local level did not emerge as a major issue in the provincial scale. Or perhaps the establishment of local parks in the 1850-1880 period in Ontario was merely the continuation in



ROYAL HOTEL, GRAVENHURST. E. COOPER, Proprietor.

BEST HOTEL IN TOWN FOR TOURISTS, SPORTSMEN OR BUSINESS MEN

STATISTICS OF THE COUNTY OF HALIBURTON

GEORGE ST. JOHN HALLEN.

Attorney at Law, Solicitor in Chancery, Etc., Etc.

MONEY TO LEND.

MORTGAGES BOUGHT AND SOLD.

MEMBER OF THE LEGAL & COMMERCIAL UNION OF THE UNITED STATES

HUNTSVILLE MUSKOKA.

Fig. 3.1 Royal Hotel, Gravenhurst, 1879. Public Archives Canada 20849.

Canada of a program and philosophy adopted in Britain and maintained by the elite in their new environment, not because the conditions in Canada demanded its implementation but because the colonial settlers wished to preserve the values and beliefs inherited from their ancestral homes.

It is clear that what might be described as a public parks movement began to be effective in the decade following the **Public Parks Act of Ontario** in 1883. The early stages of the movement saw a growing number of newspaper editorials urging local governments to establish local parks coupled with the dedication of lands for recreation donated by individuals and acquired by local government in many municipalities across the province. By the turn of the century, there remained little debate as to the necessity for public recreation grounds at the local level.

The early parks in Ontario were established in several ways: from the donation or sale of land to the municipality by an individual or family; by the acquisition of land by local government; or from the initiative of a group of citizens persuading the local council to acquire parkland. As indicated in previous sections, many local parks were located on former military lands acquired from the Federal Government, with the Garrison Reserve in Toronto as a prime example.

One of the key factors in early park development continued to be that of the altruism of the political and social elite, coupled with the growing interest in outdoor activities on the part of an increasing number of the persons whose means and interests were growing beyond mere sustenance. Many of the earliest local parks were the result of private initiative rather than public action, the town of Barrie being an interesting example.

Barrie

Queen's Park in Barrie, an eight-acre site, was turned over to the town on October 10, 1868 by Archibald C. Thomason and his wife, "to be used . . . solely for a Public Park or square."[2] The site was cleared soon after for a drill shed ground and park, and the site was soon taken over by the local militia unit who encamped on the "park," suggesting a rather broad interpretation of the terms laid down by Mr. and Mrs. Thomason. The park remained in its original condition until 1908 when the town Commission on Markets and Parks recommended that a landscape gardener be secured to deal with the ravine and water course in the park, and to develop plans for future improvements. **The Canadian Horticulturist** reported that "with the great strides that are being made in park development throughout Canada, there are few undertakings so thorough, original and modern as that recently initiated in Barrie, Ontario."[3] The town retained the services of George H. Millar, a noted landscape architect from Boston, as an advising associate for Mr. Charles Ernest Woolverton (1879-1934) who was one of the few practicing landscape architects in Ontario prior to 1910. Born in Grimsby, Ontario he studied the three year program in Horticulture at the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph. (A Landscape Gardening program was not established until 1908, although the subject matter was covered in various course options). Woolverton was a contributor to **The Canadian Horticulturist**, and a May 1910 editorial referred to him as the well-known landscape architect, although he began his career as a self-styled landscape gardener, and later advertised himself as a landscape designer, before assuming the title of landscape architect.[4] In 1910, Woolverton's timely article in the **Welland Telegraph** undoubtedly influenced a public referendum in which approval was given by the taxpayers to establish the town's first Board of Park Commissioners.[5]

Queen's Park in Barrie, located in the better residential section of the town,[6] was planned in relation to the town's needs as stated in the **Canadian Horticulturist** in 1909.

> *A place for mental and less violent physical exercises, a space reserved for neighbourly diversion with congenial uplifting environment, a residential beauty park, a common ground for quietude, refined intercourse, rest and mental recreation, and for such athletic games as will not be competetive between teams having gregarious followings. Provision for athletic fields and playgrounds is to be made in other more suitable locations.*[7]

To fulfill these functions the plan proposed such features as "the great lawn, the promenade, the outdoor auditorium, the grove, the flower mall and the ravine."[8]

Orillia

In 1869, some members of the Orillia Town Council expressed the view that the market square (dating back to 1835 and part of the original hamlet of Orillia) was not in a convenient location and that the square should be converted to a public park. Other council members felt that the market square should be sold for commercial purposes. One councillor, Mr. G.M. Wilson, could see no reason for a park, claiming that "it would be a source of evil rather than good as had been abundantly proven wherever parks were to be found."[9] The controversy continued for three more years, until a Professor Goldyn Smith of Toronto donated a half acre site to be used as a market square, and a three-acre site as Victoria Park. Smith also owned a tract of land in Barrie that he wished to subdivide for building lots. Council approved this, and agreed to clear the site of stumps as well, so Smith gained subdividable lots and the town gained a market square and a park. Not a bad deal. Couchiching Park, on the lake, was acquired a few years later (Fig. 3.2).

Other Examples

The first public park in Woodstock, in south-west Ontario, was acquired through an Act of the Provincial Legislature in 1873, whereby the town was granted permission to purchase the "Fair Ground" to be held for a pubic park, garden or walk. This was composed of 5 lots on the east side of Light Street, and 5 lots in the west side of Graham Street.[10]

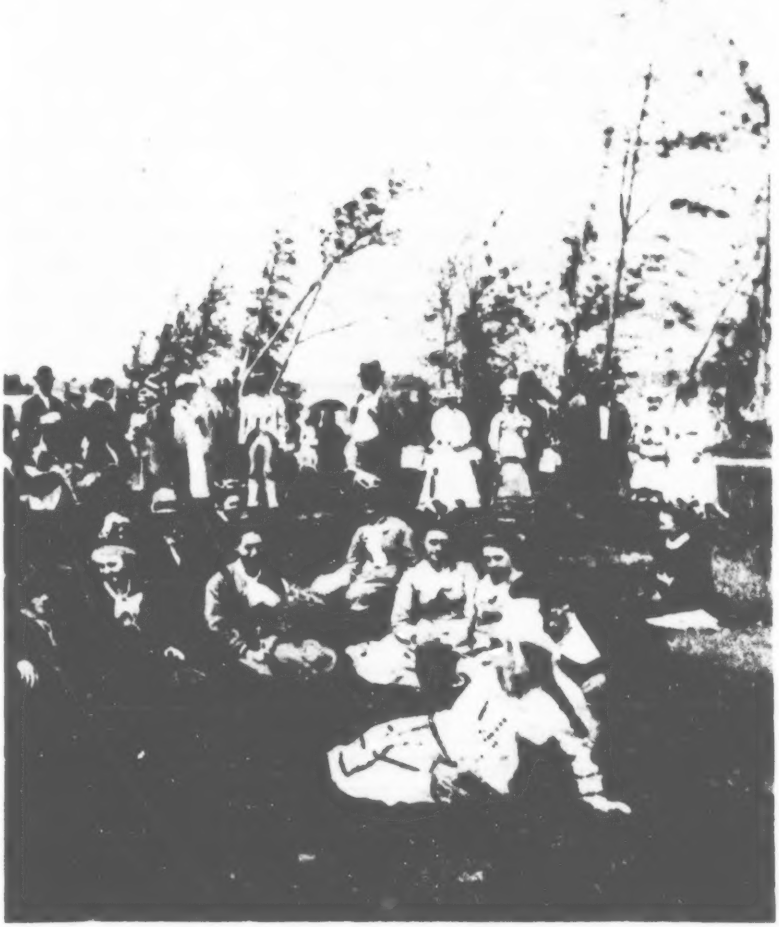
The thirty-acre Exhibition Park in Guelph, located at the northwestern edge of the "better" residential area, was acquired as the first public park and "place of exhibition" in 1871 from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hamilton for $4,950.[11]

The town of Port Hope purchased a fourteen acre park site in 1871, and engaged the services of Henry A. Engelhardt to prepare a plan for the site, for which he received a consulting fee of eighty dollars. It appeared that Engelhardt, who was shortly after appointed as Superintendent of Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Toronto (see chapter 2), was also involved in the design of Brantford's first public park.[12]

Montebello Park in downtown St. Catharines was originally the property of W.H. Merritt Jr. and known as Montebello Pleasure Grounds or Montebello Gardens, before the six and one-half acres were acquired by the city for $9,900 in 1887. Merritt died before he could erect a home on the site, so the property became the first public park in the city, after a long and heated debate by members of city council concerned about the large proposed expenditure for a relatively small site.[13]

Those arguing against the purchase felt the entire city was already a park, and that there was no need to squander scarce

Fig. 3.2 Picnics: Couchiching Park, Orillia. c. 1875-80. Ontario Archives, ST 183.



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dollars, while others thought that if the Merritts took any pride in the city they would donate the property to the city!

The city lagged behind many others in the province in the attitude to park acquisition and seemed ill-disposed to spend taxpayers' money on parkland obviously regarded as an unnecessary extravegance and did not acquire the city's second public park until 1918. However, after an overwhelming demand to establish a parks board in 1923, the city finally began to meet growing local demands for a range of recreational pursuits.[14]

A number of towns and cities in Ontario have been selected to illustrate the specific circumstances and events surrounding the establishment of the first public parks in these municipalities, including Toronto, Galt, Kitchener, London and Ottawa.

Toronto

As might be expected, Toronto, with an expanding commercial base and a growing population, took the lead in early park development in Ontario. In 1860, the City passed a bylaw delegating the upkeep and maintenance of all the public squares, parks and grounds to a Committee on Public Walks and Gardens, with games allowed only with permission of the Committee.[15]

Government, at least prior to 1850, excepting the villages and smaller towns, played a prominent role in the planning of most municipalities. Toronto is probably the best example, with land reserved along the original lakefront as an esplanade, a large government reserve (Viceregal Park) N-E of the city, and to the west of this reserve thirty-two 100 acre "park lots reserved for farms, summer homes, or country villas for the socially elite."[16] But despite the efforts to control land-use, the planning efforts soon gave away to piecemeal development by the privileged. The original "Park" lots were soon subdivided by the owners or their heirs. That economic development and growth were seen as essential was demonstrated in 1852 by the election of the Toronto businessman John G. Bowes as mayor on the platform that "railways and prosperity were synonymous."[17] The business interests were strongly in favour of commercial growth at any cost, while "the few who were wont to argue for parks and other civic improvements - often men who were not in business and who came from the older elite of the city - comprised a small minority."[18] By late 1852, railway tracks crossed the esplanade, the Garrison Reserve, and other government and private lots. After a series of futile attempts, plans for the esplanade were dropped in 1854, and, after a drought of about fifteen years during which "the railway companies had usurped parts of the Garrison Reserve which was set aside by the Dominion Government as a park," the topic of parkland was raised once more.[19]

With the increasing housing densities, and with commercial buildings and railways shutting off the waterfront, a concern was expressed by the City Council in the early 1870's for more open space. The improvements of American cities through civic betterment, including the establishment of Central Park in New York received much attention in the Toronto newspapers. A section of the Chicago waterfront was preserved from commercial use by a plan proposed by Olmsted and Vaux, resulting in a comparison to Toronto, which had virtually reneged on all prospects of a waterfront esplanade or park.[20] The two major parkland acquisitions that arose out of this climate were High Park and the Toronto Islands. However, the City Fathers were not at all convinced that recreation grounds were really essential since "the parks established in the 1870's demanded little effort or financial investment on the part of the City. When pressure arose to convert parks to commercial uses, such as

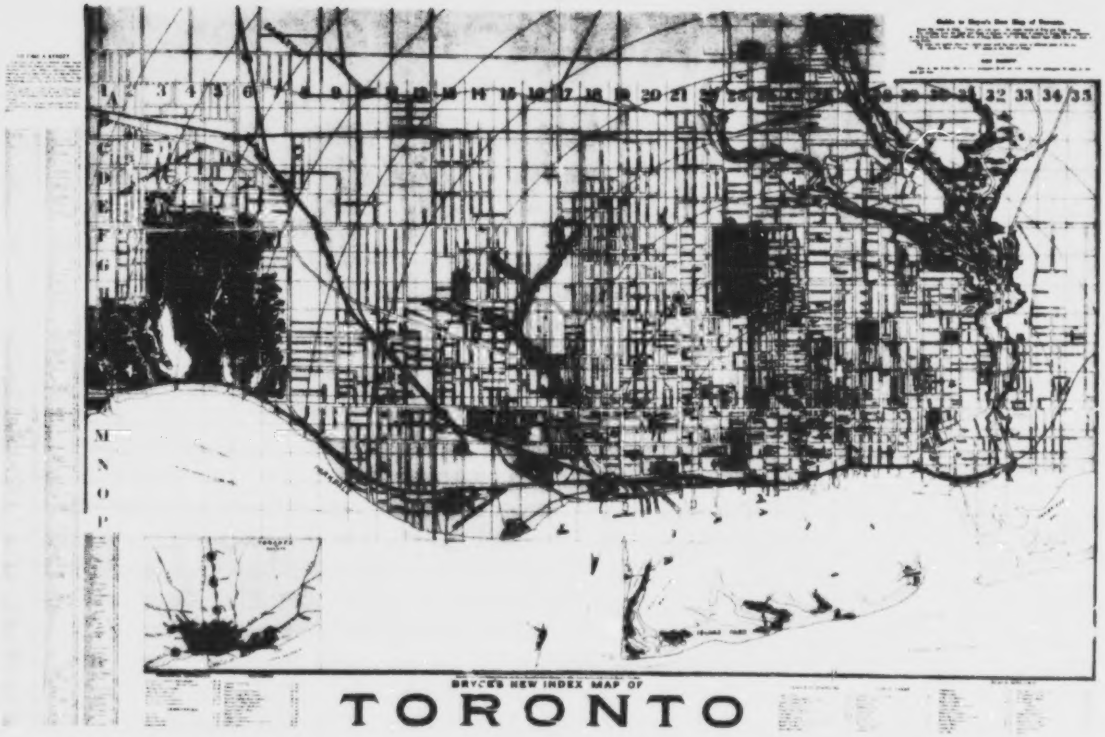

Fig. 3.3 Map of City of Toronto, showing Queen's Park, Island Park, High Park and Don Valley, 1888. Public Archives Canada, 20764.

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with the old jail site or the garrison reserve, Council did not maintain park useage."[21] Council was comprised of the business interests and their vision rarely went beyond their elected mandate, while they rationalized their attitude as beneficial in holding down the public debt and keeping taxes in check. Parks were acceptable at the fringe of the community, and hence at low cost. The need for parkland was not yet viewed as critical because of the illusion that sufficient land existed to satisfy any forseeable demand, whether for commercial or public purposes. As a result of this short-sightedness, the public parks were located "on the periphery of commercial and industrial areas and were distant from the majority of residential users as well."[22]

The cost of this non-integrated approach would eventually be borne by future taxpayers. By the 1880's City Council was conscious of the need for maintenance of the existing park sites, such as Riverdale, Allan Gardens, Ketchum, Queens Park, Clarence Square, Stanley, the Exhibition Grounds, Victoria Square and Bellwoods (Fig. 3.3), and appointed Mr. John

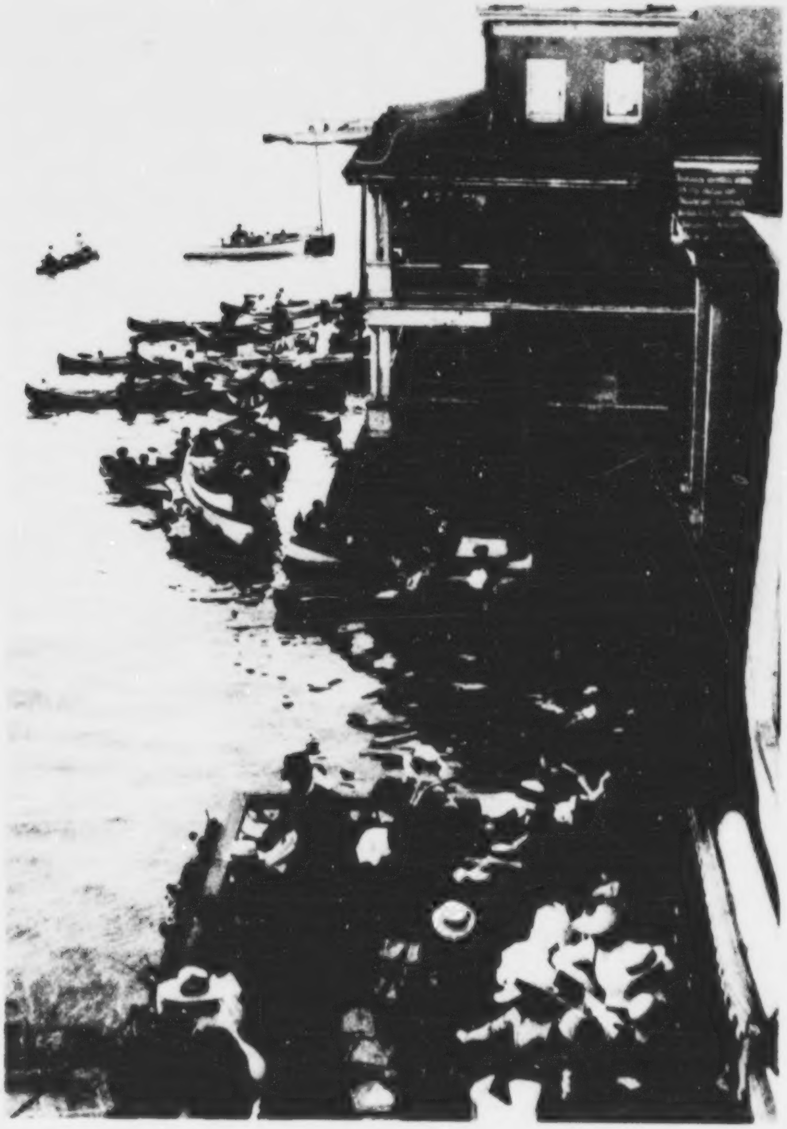

Fig. 3.4 Toronto, Alexandera Boathouse, Old waterfront at foot of York St. c. 1908. City of Toronto Archives / James 1428.

Chambers as the City's first Superintendent of Public parks in July 17, 1884, the title being changed to Commissioner of Parks eight years later. Prior to his appointment, Chambers had been responsible for the upkeep of Exhibition Park and a number of other sites[23] (Fig. 3.4 and 3.5).

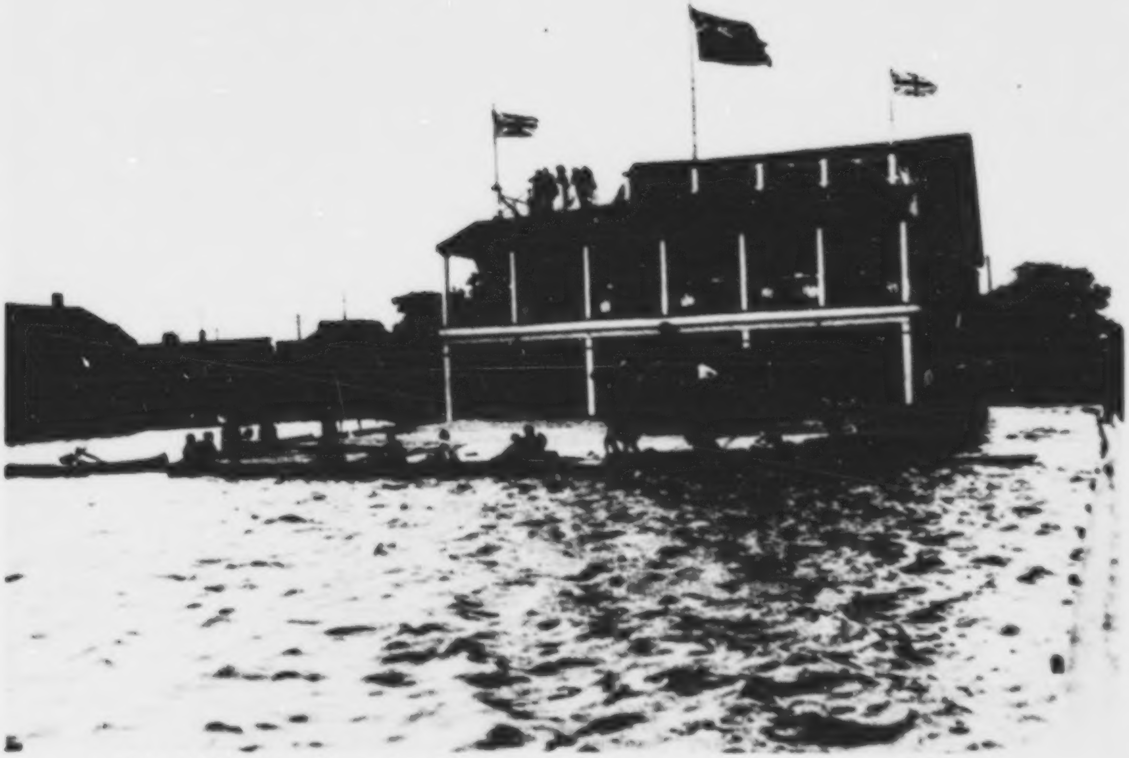

Fig. 3.5 Toronto, Alexandera Boathouse, Scullers on ramp. c. 1910. City of Toronto Archives / James 1421.

The Toronto Islands

Since the earliest settlement days of York, the Toronto "Islands" have been in turn a health camp for the Mississauga Indian, a military emplacement, summer resort, society retreat, fun fair, suburban neighbourhood, and finally a public park. Of course in its entire transition, Torontonians have used the park as a day-use recreation area.[24] The "islands" were originally a peninsula extending west from the Don River to Gilbraltar Point, with a half-mile of open water, until 1857 when a path was cut through the peninsula in a violent storm, creating the "Eastern Gap" as an eastern entry point for vessels.

The islands were first settled in the 1830's, primarily by fishermen and their families. The peninsula (or later islands) was a favourite recreation reteat for the early citizens of York, with hunting, fowling, hawking and fishing being popular with younger people. Others enjoyed walks or horse-back riding, picnics, swimming, beach parties and canoeing. It was not long before an enterprising entrepreneur saw the commercial advan-

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tages, and the following advertisement appeared in an October 1833 issue of the **Courier of Upper Canada**.

> **"The Retreat on the Peninsula"**
>
> *"Michael O'Connor makes leave respectfully to announce to the inhabitants of York that he has opened a hotel on the peninsula opposite the town where he will be ready to accomodate sportsmen, parties of pleasure and individuals who may wish to inhale the lake breeze with every kind of refreshment.*
>
> *"As the proprietor has established a horse boat to run regularly between York and this place, ladies and gentlemen may make certain of returning to the City at their own convenience."*

In 1839, the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, Lord Sydenham converted a hotel into a summer cottage on the Island, as a refuge for his family from the dreaded cholera of the town of York. Up to this point, the only structure on the island was the Gibraltar Point lighthouse and the lightkeeper's cottage. The Sydenham home was sold and converted to a summer hotel in 1843, but because of the inacessibility the business was not too successful. The owners, the Privet brothers, soon introduced the first island ferry, a boat powered by two horses walking round and round on a turn-table which was geared to a large paddle wheel. Over the years many privately operated boats, of various types, were introduced into service. The Toronto Transit Commission took over the service in 1926, and in 1962 turned the services over to the Metropolitan Parks Department. In 1846, John Howard, who later bequeathed High Park to the City, surveyed the Island with the prospect of selling off residential lots, but the idea was not pursued for another thirty years. The Crown retained rights to the land until 1847, when control was handed over to the city, with only twelve buildings on the peninsula.

By the early 1870's the local press referred to the island as a wretched and forlorn looking place, the Globe chastising the city fathers for not recognizing the uniqueness of the island and the benefits to be gained by the city's residents.[25]

By 1875 cottages, on land leased by the city, were springing up everywhere, including some grand summer residences, most of the occupants being members of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club (established in 1881) and considered Toronto's "aristocracy."

In 1875, the Committee on Wharves and Harbours stated that "the time has now arrived when the Council must consider the Islands one of its most valuable possessions and . . . take such steps as may be ncessary to protect and improve it . . .".[26] The report continued:

> *The benefits to be derived by the citizens from the close proximity to a city like Toronto of such a place as the Island, cannot be over-estimated. It is made the resort of thousands, both young and old, rich and poor. The invigorating air which is obtained, as well as the great advantage the Island affords as a place of healthful exercise is an inducement to all classes of our citizens to take a trip across our splendid Bay to visit it.*[27]

The City took possession of the Island by Crown grant in 1867, with only a small acreage set aside as public parkland and the remainder offered to city residents for cottages on a leasing arrangement. The Committee proceeded with the construction and extension of plank sidewalks, and encouraged the cottage tent and cottage lessees to plant willow and poplar trees.[28]

By 1880, the Islands boasted several hotels, a bowling alley and carousel, a small zoo, along with a number of carnival-like attractions reached by paddle-steamer from the mainland. The ferries also provided a moonlight voyage service as well as catering to picnic parties. In the winter, hotel patrons hiked across the ice, or travelled by ice-boat taxis to the islands. The summer months brought huge crowds with daring "neck to knee" swim suits, as well as the new boathouses and their rental skiffs. In this same period, the city fathers bought out one of the hotels on Middle Island, moved it to a new location further south and laid out park-like lawns for the public. By the turn of the century, there were a dozen new coal-burning ferries turning a profit on the island run, and stimulating the growth of the amusement park on Hanlan's Point, alongside three hotels, a Y.M.C.A. hostel, a number of boarding houses, and an Anglican summer church, St. Andrews-by-the-Lake. The amusement park comprised a merry-go-round, a steam-powered merry-go-round, gondola swings, shooting booths and tintype photographers along with tightrope and trapeze artists and midway entertainment of various sorts, and by 1897 Torontonians were beginning to refer to the islands as The Canadian Riviera or the Second Venice.[29] Such popularity of course, led to certain abuses which prompted the following editorial.

> *A great step in advance for the Island has set in. A few years before, there had been a great deal of rowdyism, not only on weekends, but on Sundays! The bars and groceries were crowded with the lowest class of roughs. Near these haunts it was not safe for a lady to venture. Several of the worst out-*

> *rages in the city's criminal records were committed by parties of men and women in boats well-furnished with liquor. At length, a year ago some improvement was affected in the personnel of the City Council of Toronto and a by-law was passed withdrawing all liquor licences from the Island.*[30]

Wm. Ward, a hotel owner, began to rent tents to camping visitors in the 1880's, and by the advent of the First World War, the City organized the 'tent-city' into streets, and "campers began arriving with wood-burning stoves, dressers, beds, tables and chairs".[31] Soon storage sheds were erected alongside wooden platforms. By 1920 there were a number of one-storey cottages, and by 1937 cottages had replaced the last of the tents.

By 1909, a baseball stadium built on Hanlans Point became the home of the International League Toronto Maple Leafs and was filled to capacity for every game (Fig. 3.6). In the same year the Toronto Ferry Company built "The Big Scream," a new rollercoaster, but alas, the Fantastic Fire of 1909, that could be seen as far away as Niagara Falls, levelled all the buildings on the point (Fig. 3.7).

From the early 1900's there have been many ideas and plans proposed for the Islands. A 1905 report by the Toronto Islands Parks Improvements Commission forecast that the citizens of Toronto would have "a possession of beauty and recreational usefulness not excelled in America." As part of the recommendations of this report, the Island willows were planted, Olympic Island was built, Long Pond was dregged and Muggs Island enlarged from the fill. The major changes were not to occur until the post World War II years, almost fifty years later, when the Metropolitan Parks Department assumed control of the islands in 1956 and carried out extensive redevelopment.

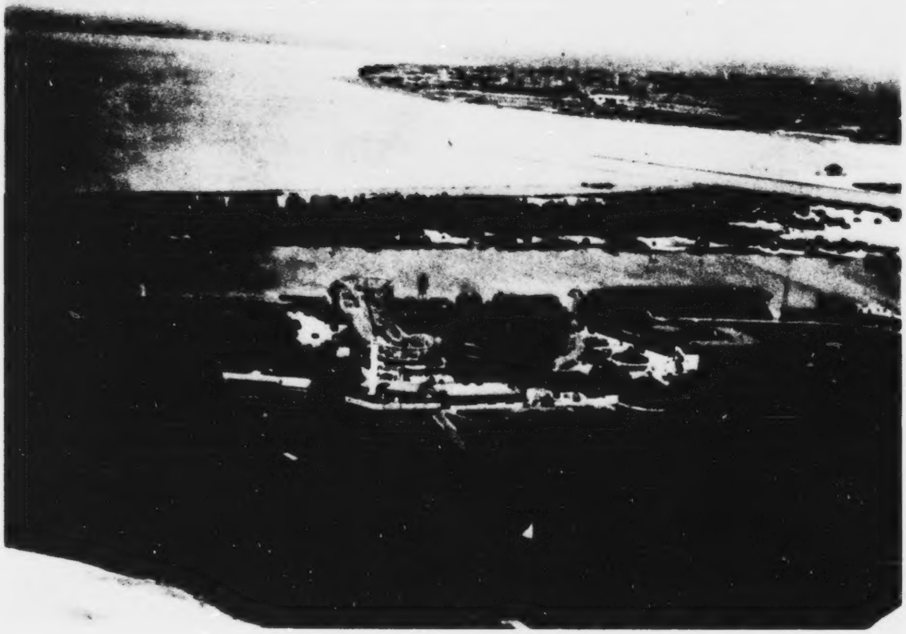

Fig. 3.6 Toronto Islands; Hanlans Point, 1912. Ontario Archives / S 6003.

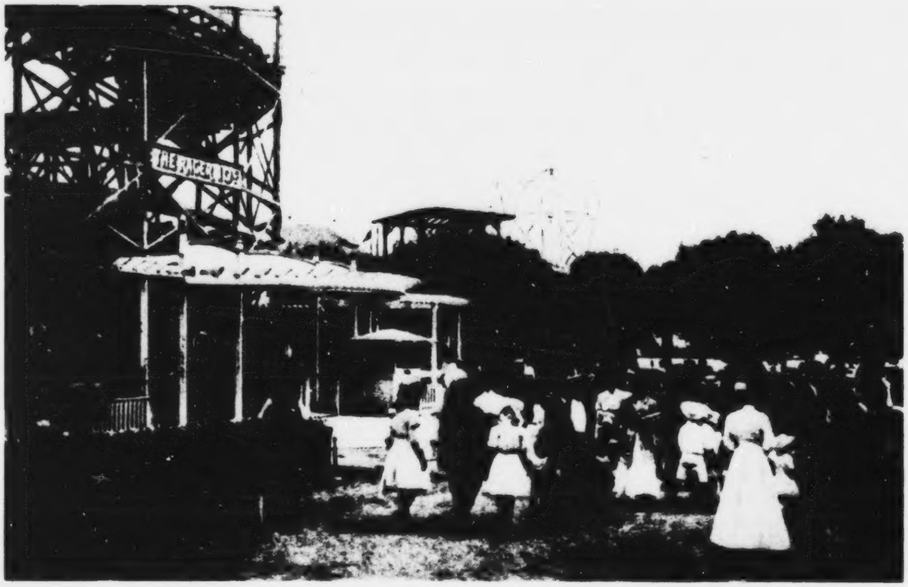

Fig. 3.7 Toronto Islands; Hanlans Point "The Racer, 10¢" Amusement Ride. c. 1911. Ontario Archives / S 2768.

High Park

High Park is located in Toronto's west end and is one of the more popular public recreation areas in the city. The park began as a private estate when, in 1836, John Howard purchased 165 acres two miles west of the city limits. Howard, a prominent architect and surveyor of the period, for a sum of $500 erected a fine home called "Colborne Lodge" (Fig. 3.8) on a sandy, eroded site adjacent to Grenadier Pond, so named when, in 1812, a number of men drowned when a regiment of the Grenadier Guards fell through the ice.[32] In 1850, the wealthy Howard retired and proceeded to develop paths and roadways, inviting picnickers from Toronto to come via carriage to enjoy the property. Howard visualized the site as a future public resort, "a quiet place where people come from the city to picnic under the trees."

In 1873 Howard wrote the City Council, "having spent all my earnings in improving and beautifying High Park, I have for many years wished it should eventually become the property of the City of Toronto as a place of public resort for the citizens. . ." and he offered the property on condition that:[33]

a) no intoxicating liquor ever be sold in the park;
b) the land be forever held as a public park for the free use and enjoyment of Torontonians;
c) a grave plot for he and his wife be set aside and cared for in perpetuity;
d) 120 acres be turned over to the city three years after council accepted these conditions;
e) the remaining 45 acres (Colborne Lodge) be surrendered at Howard's and wife's death;
f) if Toronto were to accept, the City would pay a $1200 annual annuity to Howard and wife;

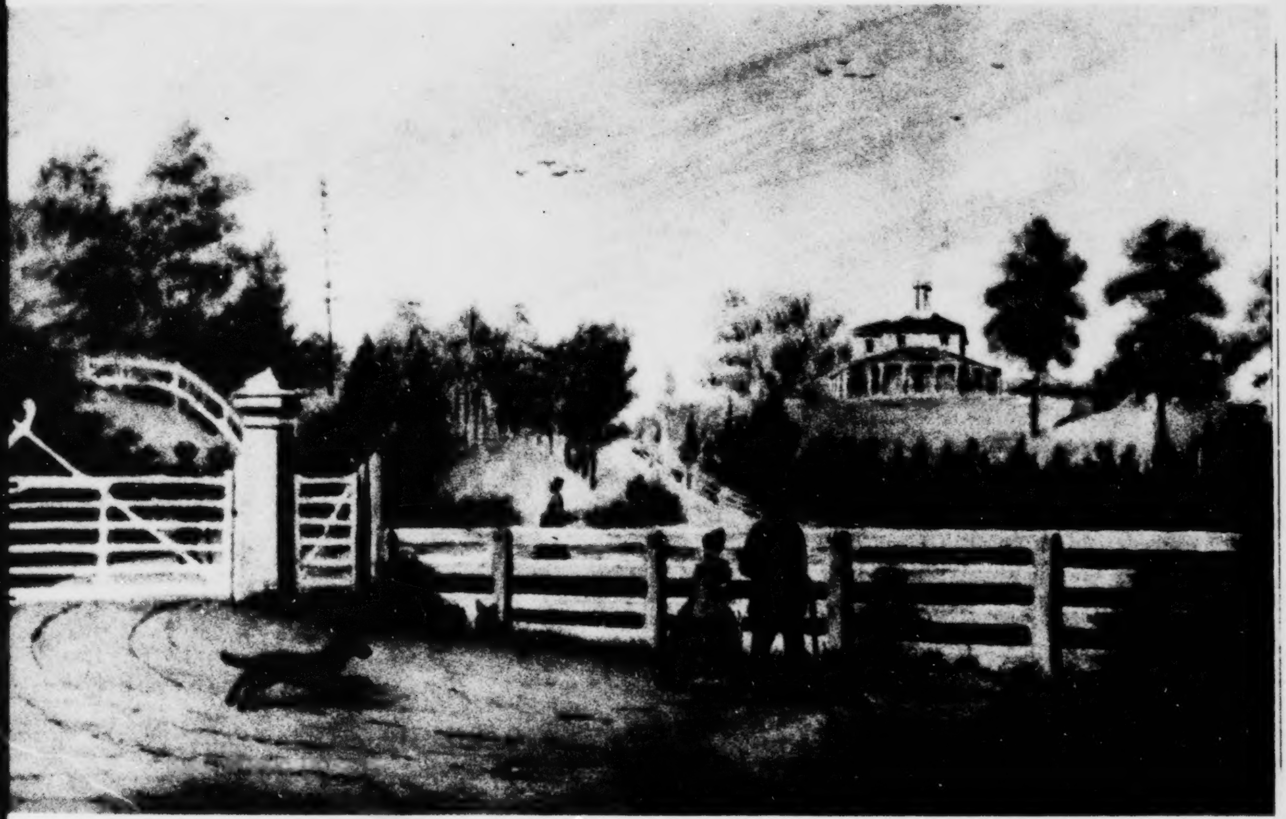

Fig. 3.8 Toronto, Colborne Lodge, gate, Lakeshore Rd., c 1870 Metropolitan Toronto Library, T 11328.

g) Howard be appointed as Honorary Forest Ranger at a salary of $1 a year.

City Council deliberated for almost six weeks, concerned that the property was too far from the city, when there were picnic spots closer to town, and recognizing Howard's request for $1200 as an excessive demand on civic funds. On the other hand, the council members realized that Howard was, after all, 70 years of age and that "a gift was a gift."[34] Members also acknowledged that "if ever Toronto expanded to the west, Mr. Howard's estate might become useful parkland."[35] Council finally accepted the offer in a 13 to 2 decision. Although Howard's wife passed away only four years later, Howard lived for another 17 years, collecting $20,400 in annuity payments and $17 in ranger fees. It is interesting to note that Howard valued the property at $25,000 in 1873. A rather shrewd gamble! Refraining from attaching his name to the site, Howard requested that it be called High Park and thus revealed much of his innate humility (Fig. 3.9).

Fig. 3.9 Toronto, High Park, Looking across Howard Lake to Rennie Seed Co. c. 1900. Ontario Archives/ S 7441.

Two years after the offer was accepted by the City, on Howard's advice Council bought an additional 170 acres to the east of his estate for $15,000, bringing the total area of the park up to 335 acres. The final addition to the park was made in 1930, with the city's purchase of the 71.8 acre Grenadier Pond area for $150,000, which brought the overall purchase price for the 406 acre site up to $185,417, not a bad bargain in to-day's economy.[36]

In 1890, deer enclosures were added to the park, which was already used for picnicking, horse-back riding, carriage drives, walking and fishing. By 1910, winter tobogganing (Fig. 3.10) was very common. The park remained in a natural state, unchanged from its original condition thoughout its first 30 years as a public park (Fig. 3.11). In fact, there was virtually no civic expenditure for upkeep for years after Howard's death (Fig. 3.12). By 1912, the winter use of the park was so popular that Council passed a bylaw (not rescinded until 1961) prohibiting Sunday use of the tobogan slides because of disrespect for

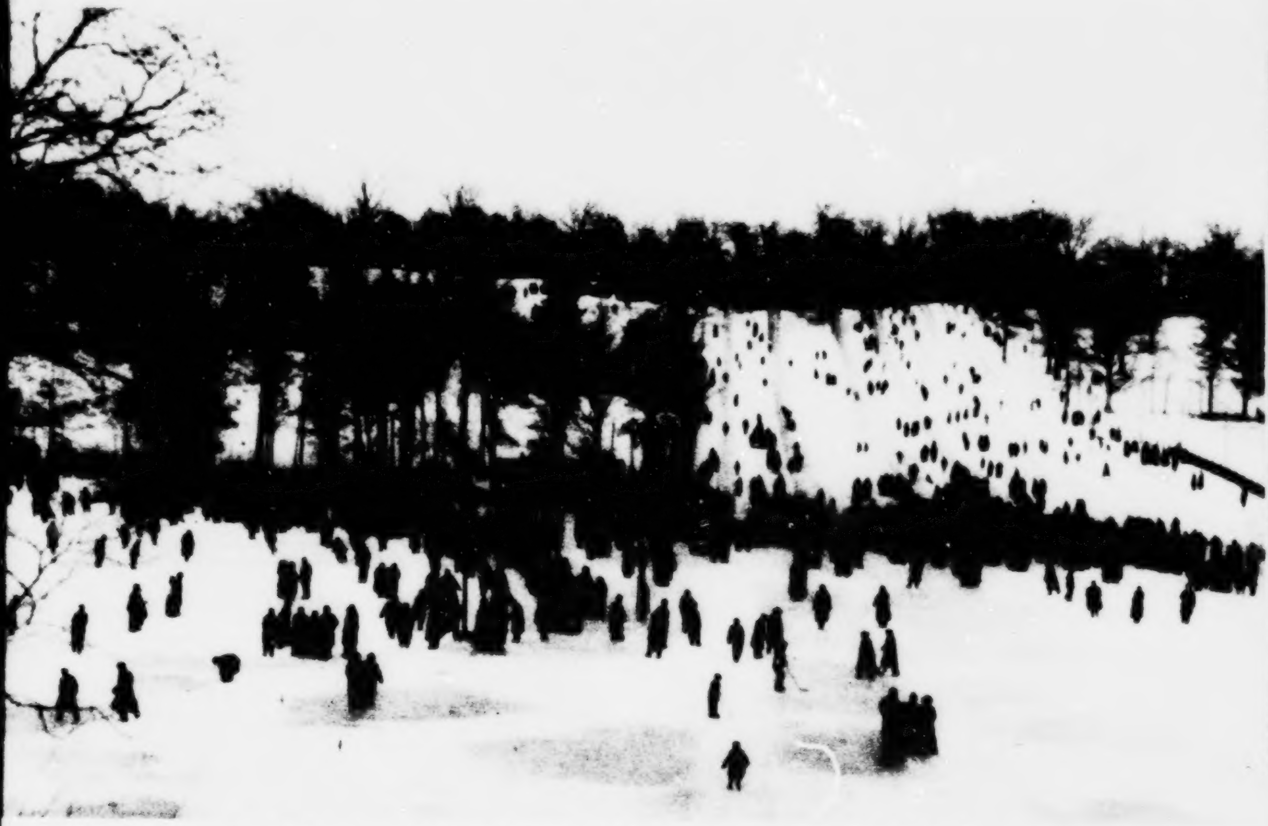

Fig. 3.10 Toronto, High Park, Winter toboggoning, c. 1900. Ontario Archives.

the Sabbath. The first public lavatory was built in 1913 but no other significant structural changes were implemented until the 1940's when the addition of playground equipment and greenhouses occurred in the post-war years. In 1960, the long-vacated Colborne Lodge was restored by the Toronto Historical Board for public use.[37]

High Park continues to offer a natural environment for a broad range of recreational opportunities, a sorely needed relief in a densely-populated sector of metropolitan Toronto.[38] Unfortunately, Grenadier Pond lies polluted with sewage and silt, a victim of urbanization and 'progress.'

Galt

The city of Galt acquired its first park in 1871, when Mr. William Dickson donated to the town a twenty-one acre site on a piece of property on the west side of the power dam adjacent to the business district. Soon after the transfer of land was completed, the city, under pressure from the business interests, gave up six acres on the river front to the Grand Trunk Railway.

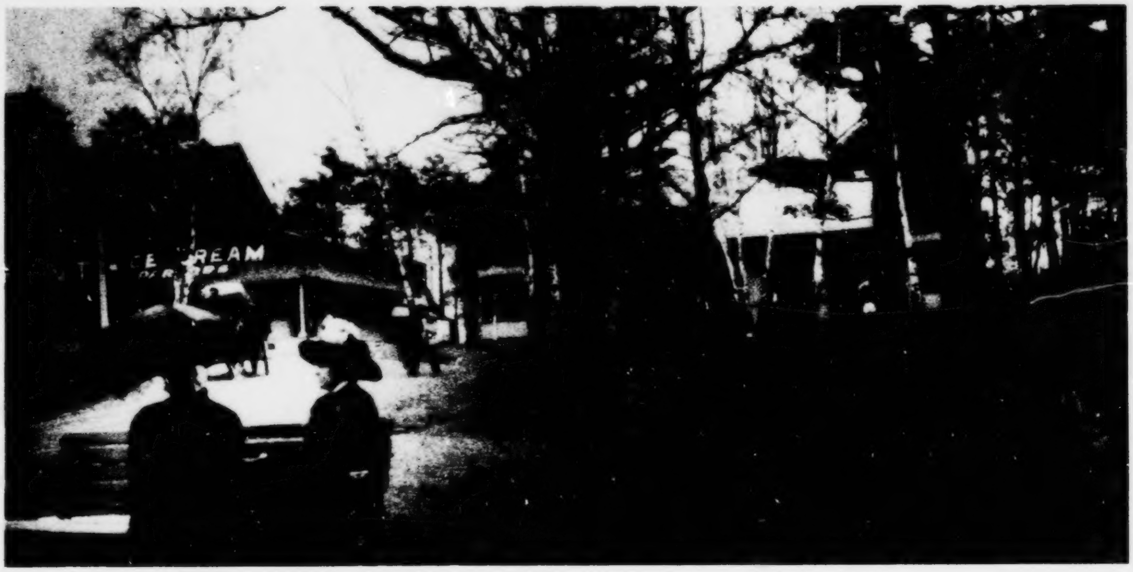

Fig. 3.11 Toronto, High park, Pavillion and Restaurant, 1912. City of Toronto Archives, Park Films 53-22.

Fig. 3.12 Toronto, High Park from restaurant, 3 May, 1914. Public Archives Canada/ PA 61143.

The townspeople soon realized that a valuable waterfront asset was lost, along with the possibility of a "Central" Park. But as in the case of Toronto, the railroad "barons" were king and most municipalities were ready for any sacrifice to stimulate industry and town growth in a highly competitive market.[39] The remaining fourteen acres of Dickson Park were devoted to sports and athletic games by the turn of the century, since the park was also used for the annual Fall Fair under the terms of Dickson's will. An agricultural exhibit hall and a horse-racing oval were also built in this early period, as were a bandstand and terraced walks and ornamental plantings begun in an attempt to contribute towards making the park "a most creditable recreation and pleasure ground."[40]

While the town inherited its first public park before many municipalities, there was a waiting period of about fifteen years before further additions were made to the original site. About 1887, the congregation of St. Andrews Church transferred the three-acre church cemetery on the western slopes of the town, over to the municipality. This had been an original burying grounds and was used up until the 1830's, and in respect to the relatives of the deceased, the newly created St. Andrews Park was intended to serve as "a restful recreation ground rather than a pleasure resort."[41]

High Park, established in 1895, belonged to the "American" Presbyterian Church as a cemetery until the development of a civic God's Acre on Blenheim Road rendered the site unnecessary, and the site was turned over to the town. It was also established as a treed and terraced recreation ground in respect of its former function.[42]

Other early parks are: Prospect Park, a four-acre site laid out in 1892 on the highest elevation in Galt; Central Park, a small tract of land, donated to the town by a citizen in the

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1890's because it contained a magnificent and stately oak tree, a relic of pre-settlement days; Victoria Park was a gift from E. Langdon Wilks Esq. in 1901, containing twenty-eight acres of woodland, dedicated "to the late beloved Sovereign of the British Empire."[43] Mr. Wilkes had been a world traveller and "had seen the advantages of parks dedicated to the uses of the people" and stipulated that the Park should be managed "to retain its natural beauty and remain forever free to the public."[44] The municipality added nine acres to the original site at the time it was donated, as open grounds for athletic purposes.

Of some significance was the purchase of a ten-acre site at the head of Shade Street in 1901 for a public playground, known as Jackson Park after the name of the original owner.

It seems that the citizens of Galt were very park conscious with strong political support. In 1901, three members of council presented a comprehensive park scheme which was turned down in the first instance by the voters, but within twelve months public opinion had accepted the scheme. As reported in the **Galt Reporter** at this time, "it needs only the creation of a playground in the vicinity of the Waterworks to give Galt a chain of parks excelled in no other town in Canada."[7] The Galt Parks Commission was established in 1904, another indicator of support for its public parks.

Kitchener

Kitchener's roots go back over 180 years, to the early settlement of the region by Mennonites from Pennsylvania. The earliest hamlet was known as Sand Hills, then as Ebytown, and in 1854 was incorporated as the village of Berlin, and went on to become a town in 1870, and a city in 1912. The name of Kitchener was adopted in 1916, at the height of the First World War.[46]

The friendly and sometimes not so friendly rivalry betwen

Waterloo and Kitchener goes back to the early settlement days of both centers. In the 1870's Waterloo proposed that the two municipalities unite, but Mount Hope Cemetery became the stumbling block to the agreement: the amalgamation involved removal of the remains from Mounth Hope to a new burial ground but Berlin opposed the conversion of the cemetery into Union Park. So the prospect of amalgamation was lost, along with the site for a central park.

The 25-acre Woodside Park was Kitchener's first public park, purchased in 1872 for $2,500 from the son of Joseph Schneider, the founder of Berlin. The members of Council acted on the basis of a petition from a group of prominent citizens, an indication of the progressive attitudes of the town's influentials. This same group of gentlemen donated $214 to clear one end of the park as a field for lacrosse, baseball and football. A drill shed was moved to the site by the Federal Government, and a local group of horsemen established a race track. To further stimulate the development of the park, a Town Park Association was formed under the presidency of J.M. Staebler, who was later named chairman of the town's first Parks Board. The Association sold 55 memberships at one dollar each, and used the money to purchase trees and shrubs to improve Woodside. Council voted a like sum to grade a driveway and build a grandstand. With these improvements, the park was used as an agricultural fair grounds in the latter 1890's.

Kitchener's second park, and, historically, most widely known, was established in 1894 at the instigation of Mayor Daniel Hibner, and was named Victoria Park. The site chosen comprised 28 acres of low-lying land at the south-west edge of the town, purchased from Samuel B. Schneider at a cost of $6,000. The Parks Board, established the same year, proceeded with plans to develop the park but a heated controversy soon arose over the pros and cons of developing a swamp when there was a definite possibility that the new, 5-acre, man-made lake would become a stagnant breeding area for mosquitoes. Based on the advice of M. A. Richer, an engineer from Buffalo, New York, the plans of the Board developed by J.M. Stuebler, a member, were approved. Criticism also arose over the decision to locate the park on the edge of town, at a distance from the central business area, but the park was officially opened on the Civic Holiday of August 27, 1896, with the newly-formed lake and Roos Island (named after William Roos, a Parks Board member) in its centre, complemented by driveways, walks, and picnic facilities. The development funds had been raised from a $12,000 civic debenture, which "extravagance" was loudly proclaimed by at least one member of City Council. Mr. C.F. Brown, chairman of the Board, immediately offered to purchase the park from the town for the sum that had been expended by the city, but the Council members did not accept the offer and the protest died as quickly as it had arisen.

A splendid pavilion, typical of public parks of the period, was built in 1902, but was demolished in a fire in the First World War years. By 1914, the park was in a sorry state of disarray and mismanagement, and was overgrown with weeds as a result of the efforts of poorly-trained workers and inadequate supervision. On August 1, 1914, Bernard Koehler, bringing with him from Germany a lineage of 400 years of landscape gardening experience, was appointed superintendent of Victoria Park. Koehler appears to have had a remarkable personality and, with the support of the local M.P.P., he acquired provincial funding to initiate a tree-planting program, to erect a 20' x 50' greenhouse, and to create a natural swimming pool by damming Schnieder Creek. In addition, the new superintend-

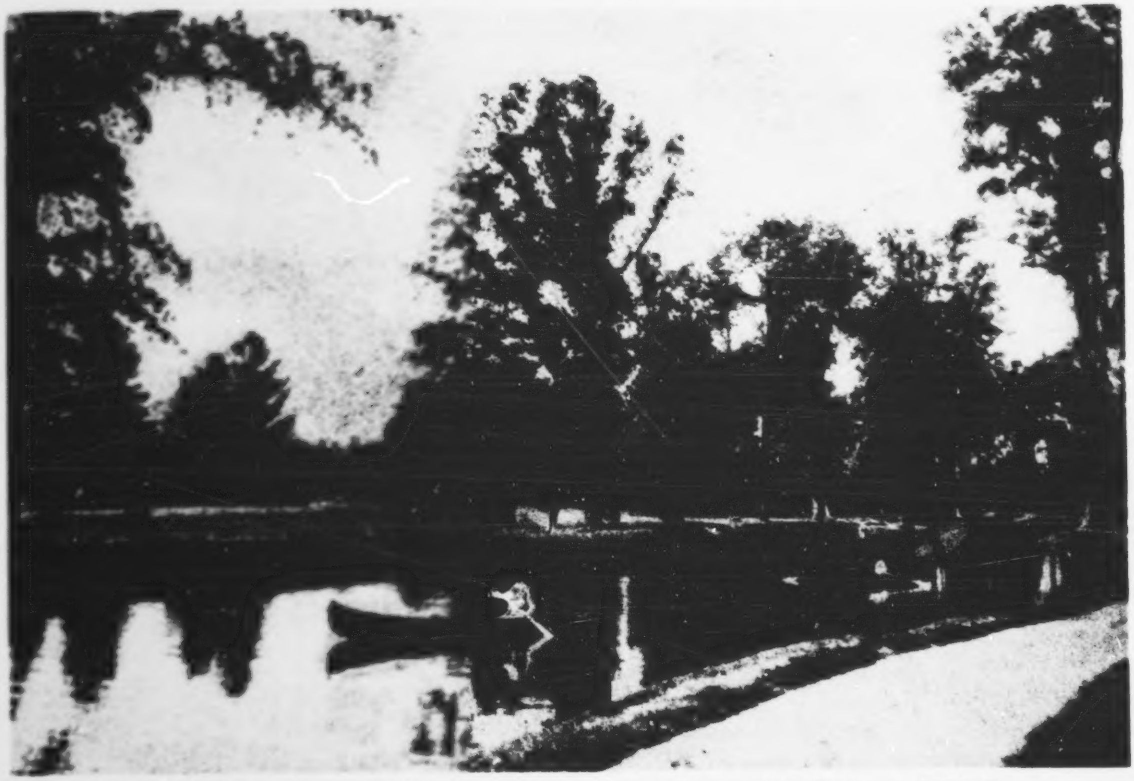

Fig. 3.13 Berlin, Victoria Park. View taken from N-E side beyond the Bridge. c. 1912. City of Kitchener Parks and Recreation Department.

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ent had to overcome an outstanding capital debt of $83,000. His efforts were soon recognized, and the civic leaders could boast of Victoria Park in glowing terms: (Fig. 3.13).

> *Berlin is to be congratulated in possessing a Park that is the pride of the country and the talk of the Dominion among all who have had the pleasure of visiting it.*[47]

Victoria Park became the centre of a highly charged emotional controversy at the outbreak of the First World War, when the desirability of changing the name Berlin to a more appropriate Anglicized version became a civic issue. The war was but a week old when the Union Jack flag near the statue of Queen Victoria (Fig. 3.14) was torn down and replaced with a German flag.[48] This was followed by the abrupt removal of the statue of Kaiser Whilhelm 1 from its base and its disposal in the park's lake. The bust was recovered by soldiers of the 118th Batallion, melted down, and forged into rings showing the batallion's crest which were distributed as souvenirs.[49] The degree and

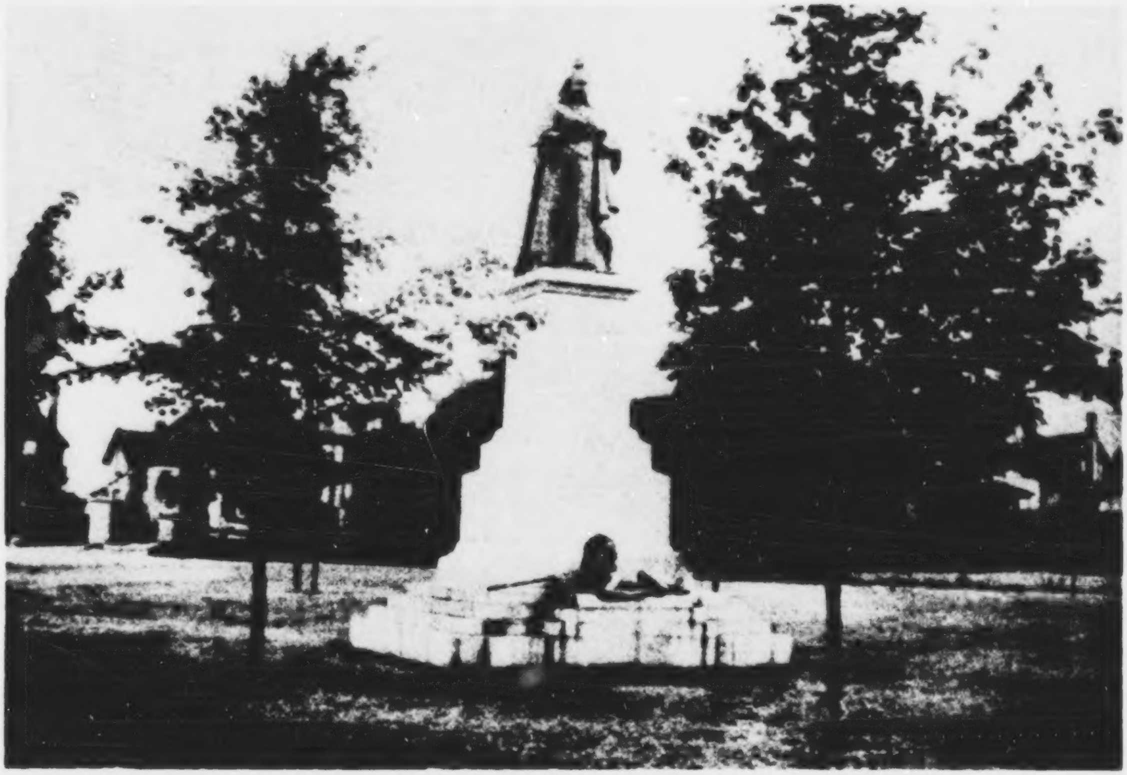

Fig. 3.14 Berlin, Victoria Park, Statue of the late Empress, Victoria. c. 1914. City of Kitchener Parks and Recreation Department.

depth of nationalistic passions became clear when the Parks Board received letters threatening that the park buildings would be burned down if the park superintendent was not dismissed. The board gave in to these threats and Koehler was fired. Soon after the superintendent's dismissal, the park pavilion was burned down anyway, but it is not clear whether this was a protest for or against his dismissal.[50]

Victoria Park remains to-day a functional, well-used "city" park. Although the pavilion is relatively new, and the old grandstand and 78 year-old iron bridge to Roos Island have been dismantled, the basic layout of the park remains in its original form, the reflection of a by-gone era, offering a diversity of recreative opportunities to both local citizens and visitors to the city of Kitchener.

London

Colonel John Graves Simcoe selected the site for London in 1792, proposing it as the future capital of Upper Canada and suggesting that it be named Georgia-Upon-Thames. His dream was dashed when York was chosen instead, leaving the fork in the Thames River unsettled until the first cabin was built in 1826. By 1840 the settlement boasted 1800 persons, grist mills and a tannery. London was incorporated as a town in 1848, and was a city with a population of over 10,000 by 1855. The original town survey shows a public square called St. James Park running along Stanley Street between Wortley and Wharncliffe Roads. It was laid out by Colonel Maklon Burwell, the chief surveyor of the town, and member of the Legislature of Upper Canada. It seems the city fathers did not see the need for such an extravagance and leased the land to a private owner in 1856, and then sold off the parcel for building purposes a few years later.[51] While the need for public recreation did not seem to be of much importance, the large military establishment was involved in a wide range of recreational pursuits including cricket, football, and horse racing. The wealthy upper classes in town were also included in these activities, but the public-at-large were not. The British garrison was recalled to Britain in 1868, and, probably as a fortunate turn of events, the old barracks on the military grounds burned in 1873.[52]

To one of London's leading citizens of the period must go the credit for the initiation of the first public parks. James Egan was an Alderman and Chairman of the Fire, Light and Water Committee of City Council, and early in 1871 he convinced his fellow council members of the need for public recreation space for a growing city, with London's population being over 15,800 persons at that time. As a first step, the Council formed a Standing Committee on Public Parks. In 1873, Egan made a personal visit to Ottawa and obtained an order-in-council granting the city of London the 15-acre former military cricket pitch which was re-named Victoria Park, and which was dedicated to all the citizens of London on August 24th, 1874 by the Governor General, Lord Dufferin. The new park remained fenced and was used for some sporting events, as an exercise ground for horsemen, and as a site for occasional band concerts. A windmill had been erected to pump water from a well, and, in May of 1879, an ornamental fountain was installed by the Waterworks Commission. However, there had been no serious attempt made to produce a design and layout of the grounds, and only a paltry attempt was made to landscape the site.[53]

In 1878, Mr. William Miller, the head gardener of Fairmount Park in Philadelphia was visiting London as the guest of Mr. William Saunders (who in later years became the Superintendent of the Dominion Experimental Farm in Ottawa).[54] Miller developed a plan for Victoria Park on behalf of the board of alderman's parks committee, showing gravelled walks and carriage drives and five entrances enhanced by large gates, as well as the preservation of the two rows of maples planted on the perimeter of the site a few years earlier.

The design proposal was presented to Council, and caused a sharp split in this venerable assembly. While one bloc approved the plans and hoped for immediate action, the other proposed that Miller's plans be dropped and a local gardener commissioned to design the park. The Miller plan was finally adopted, and, with the vote, two members of Council submitted their resignations. The development of the park proceeded as proposed by Miller. Another, but larger, ornamental fountain was erected, and remained in place for almost sixty years, until it was replaced by a more modern type and the windmill was removed, water being made available from the city water supply. In addition, more trees and shrubs were planted on the site.

Victoria Park, located to-day in the central downtown sector of the city, remains a valuable and treasured civic space, retaining many elements of the original Miller design.

In the same year (1878) that the plan for Victoria Park was drawn up, a forty-acre parcel of land was deeded to the City by the estates of Andrew McCormick and Dr. Salter, which became known as Queen's Park. This land was leased to the Western Fair Association in 1886 as the site of the Western Fair which continues to operate to this day at the same location.[55]

Ottawa

Major's Hill Park was the first public park established in the city of Ottawa. It lies to the immediate west of the Parliament Buildings, on a dramatic promontory overlooking the Rideau Canal and the Ottawa River, covering a portion of the 400 acres purchased by the Crown in 1824 for purposes of military defence. When the decision was made to build the Rideau Canal, a house was erected on the site in 1826 for Colonel John By, the engineer in charge of the canal project, and the area became known as Colonel's Hill. When the Colonel was recalled to England in 1832, the area became know as Major's Hill in recognition of Major Daniel Bolton, By's successor. Fire destroyed the residence in early 1849, and as it was not rebuilt, the site reverted to a cow pasture.[56] Through time, the citizens became increasingly aware of the importance of the site as a place suited to public use, a place of natural beauty in a quickly-developing lumber town. In the fall of 1860, a group of citizens petitioned the Provincial Government to develop Major's Hill as a park and recreation area. The newspaper **The Citizen** made the park idea the subject of its first editorial in January, 1861.

> *A movement is now in progress in this city having a very desirable object in view, viz: — the formation of a public park or pleasure ground. The originators of this project deserve great credit at the hands of*

> *their fellow citizens, and are entitled to expect unanimous support and encouragement. Now is the time, while there is yet plenty of unoccupied ground about us to raise this question. At the great advantages of a public park there cannot be any difference of opinion we should presume, and those who are aware of the difficulties which such an undertaking has to encounter in old cities will rejoice that it has been taken up here in this early state of the existence of Ottawa.*[57]

The editorial suggested that other locations might be preferable to the Major's Hill, but that regardless of the choice of site, "it is absolutely necessary for sanitary and recreative purposes that a spacious plot of land should be secured, whereon a Park may be formed."[58] **The Citizen** tried to influence the choice of a site other than Major's Hill, but the public view that the "Hill" was the only choice for a public park persisted. However, the Federal Government ignored this view and voted for a new Government House to be situated on Major's Hill or on the adjacent property, Nepean Point.[59] A Toronto architectural firm, Cumberland and Stone, won the competition; however, the contract to construct the residence was never awarded for a number of reasons, and the attention of Government was occupied with other matters. Almost as a stop-gap measure, Rideau Hall was leased as a temporary residence in 1864. Of course, this residence was subsequently purchased and became the permanent residence of the Governor-General.

The Hill was left undeveloped although the Government continued to retain the land as a potential location of the Governor General's residence, not conceding its potential as a public park site. In the 1860's the park became the performance ground for band concerts provided on Saturday and Sunday afternoons by the various Imperial regiments stationed at Ottawa. As well, there were other special events and public celebrations held on the grounds, keeping alive the notion that the site should be dedicated as a public recreation area, the new park serving as a central point of celebration for the first Dominion Day, when a huge fire of brushwood and logs was followed by fireworks on midnight of June 30, 1867. The controversy as to the future of the site was brought to a head in the early 1870's when City Council announced that a new city hall was needed, and that Major's Hill would be an ideal setting for the new structure. A committee of local citizens strongly opposed to such an idea successfully lobbied the Mackenzie King Government and the matter was dropped. Then a motion introduced in City Council to acquire the land for park purposes was passed, and the City then approached the Federal Government in 1874 with its request, basing part of its argument on the fact that "offensive rubbish was deposited on the Major's Hill to the deteriment of public health."[60] By late August, 1874, the Government had agreed to lease the land, its principal terms being that the City put in order and improve the site to be known as Major's Hill Park according to a general plan to be submitted by the City authorities to the Minister of Public Works. It was almost a year later that the City Engineer submitted a plan for the park. The original plan, unfortunately, no longer exists, but a few brief accounts of the agreed-upon plan describe fountains, walkways and a semi-circular carriage way, mounted cannons, shade trees, and an ornamental iron fence at the front of the park, facing the bridges, and on the Mackenzie Avenue side. Construction of the park facilities and layout proceeded well until the summer of 1876 when a series of complaints and criticisms arose about the misuse of materials and the negligence of the contractor. **The Citizen** stated that "it is really too bad to find the grass plots being used as foot paths."[61] Grass was to be viewed, but it was certainly not to be walked upon!

The City renamed the site Dominion Park in 1874, and added a semi-circular carriageway, new flower beds, a glass pavillion, several fountains and a small pond in the north-east section. By 1885, the City had spent $35,000 in park development and arrived at the conclusion that it could afford neither further capital costs nor current maintenance expenditures. In addition to vandalism, every day "wear and tear" was taking its toll, and with a certain regret, the City returned the park to the care of the Federal Department of Public Works in 1885 (Fig. 3.15). By this time, the park was widely used, and on summer evenings was crowded with people strolling, resting, and enjoying band concerts given by the Governor General's Foot Guards.[62] (Fig. 3.16). The park's original name was reinstated and Major's Hill Park has remained as a public park with only one significant change in its original boundary. In 1907, the southern end of the park was sold for $100,000 to the Grand Trunk Railway to be used as the site of the Chateau Laurier Hotel, which was built between 1908 and 1912. In later years (1945), the beautiful natural pond in the north-west sector of the park was filled, graded and seeded for reasons that remain mysterious (Fig. 3.17) One year later the pavillion was dismantled, being considered unsafe, and the park lost certain of its romantic charm under the guise of efficiency.

Major's Hill was acquired as a public park because of local citizen action. This is probably typical of the type of pressure or groundswell prevelant in many Ontario municipalities of this period that collectively can be identified as a public park movement.

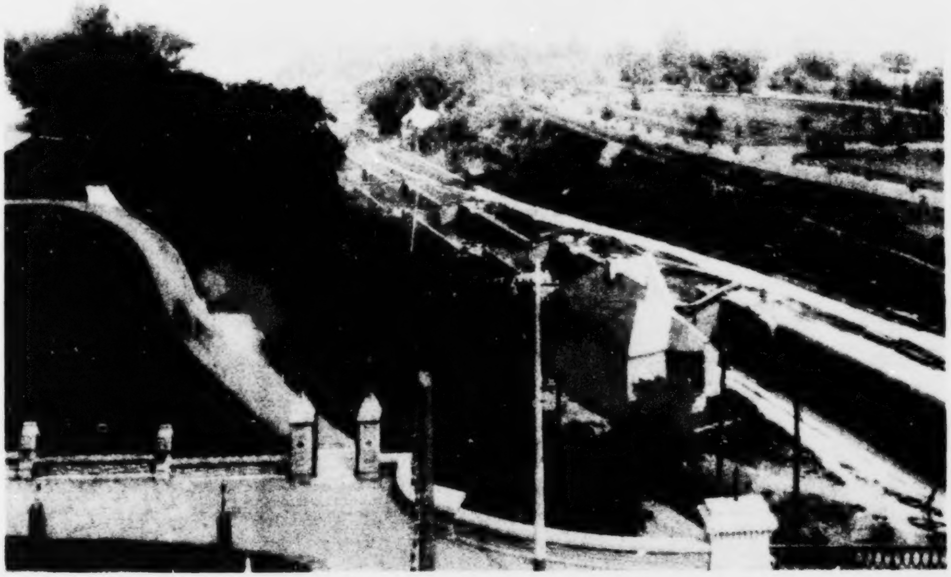

Fig. 3.15 Majors Hill Park, Ottawa, as viewed across Rideau Canal. c. 1890. Ottawa Historic Society.

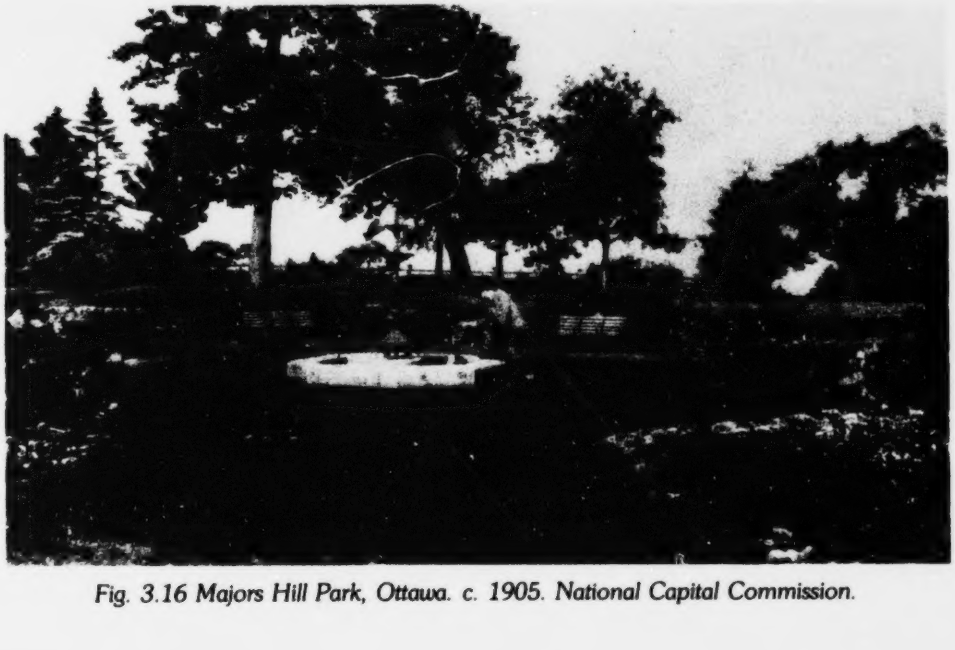

Fig. 3.16 Majors Hill Park, Ottawa. c. 1905. National Capital Commission.

Fig. 3.17 Majors Hill Park, Ottawa. Natural pond removed. c. 1945. c. 1910. Ottawa Historical Society.

Summary and Conclusions

Despite the promising origins of the acquisition of land for public recreation in the 1850's in Toronto, Kingston, and Hamilton, the park movement in Ontario had a very slow beginning, and with a few exceptions the ground swell to provide local parks began about twenty years after the first civic land acquisitions. Toronto acquired Queen's Park in 1859 to add to its several other small acquisitions, and in 1867 acquired the Toronto Islands but dedicated only a few acres as public parkland. Hamilton set aside Victoria Park in 1859. With the exception of Barrie in 1869 there appears to have been little evidence of parkland acquisition in the balance of Ontario municipalities until the early 1870's when a flurry of activity stimulated the park movement across the province.

The town of Galt set aside its first park in 1871, as did Guelph and Port Hope; Orillia and Kitchener in 1872; Woodstock and London in 1873; Toronto acquired High Park in 1873; Ottawa set aside Major's Hill in 1874, as prominent examples of this period.

Personal and individual philanthropy played a key role in a few of these examples as in Barrie and Toronto (High Park), but the great majority of parkland acquisitions came through the actions of influential local leaders with the support of local elected officials or from the actions of the combined efforts of local members of council.

These first parks were all acquired to satisfy the perceived needs of the day, a picturesque natural setting providing a place of beauty and repose amidst the busy and hectic urban scene. In effect, the parks followed the Olmsted philosophy of pastoral relief for the health and morals of the urban dweller, ideally a perpetuation of the rural milieu as a contrast to the unhealthy living environment of both home and work-place. The park was widely promoted as the "lungs of the city."

While a few personalities emerge from this period as trained gardeners or landscape architects, most of the early parks were laid out and designed by amateurs. Frederick Law Olmsted's influence was not apparent in Canada until the latter part of the 1870's, while Henry A. Engelhardt (Toronto) appears to have been one of the few, if not the only, trained landscape designer in Ontario at this time. There were trained gardeners, but not landscape architects before the turn of the century.

NOTES

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2. Correspondence with Secretary of Board of Park Management, Barrie W.W. Sargeant, February 16, 1984.
3. "A Model Park for Barrie, Ontario" in **The Canadian Horticulturist**, Toronto, September, 1909, p. 190.
4. Pleasance Crawford "Charles Ernest Woolverton (1879-1934), Ontario Landscape Architect," **Landscape Architectural Review**, p. 18.
5. Ibid., p. 17.
6. **The Canadian Horticulturist**, p. 190.
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8. Ibid.
9. Allan Ironside, **Anecdotes of Old Orillia**, Vol. 8, No. 1, Part 1, date unknown.
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12. Pleasance Crawford, "H.A. Engelhardt (1830-1897). Landscape Designer", **Landscape Architectural Review**, Vol. 5, No. 2, July, 1984, p. 34.
13. **The St. Catharines Standard**, March 13, 1976, p. 10.
14. Ibid., p. 10.
15. Elsie McFarland, **Development of Public Recreation in Canada**, Canadian Parks/Recreation Association, Ottawa, 1975, p. 8.
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17. Ibid., p. 159. Further details are provided in **Urban Parks in Ontario, Origins to 1860**, Chapter 6.
18. G.P. de T. Glazebrook, p. 179.
19. Francis N. Mellen, "**The Development of the Toronto Waterfront During the Railway Expansion Era 1850-1912**," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1974, p. 146.
20. Ibid., p. 145.
21. Ibid., 147, 148.
22. Ibid., p. 154.
23. "Résumé of Parks and Recreation Development 1860-1968," Department of Parks and Recreation, City of Toronto, no date, p. 4.
24. Betty Lee, "These Islands are Made of Memories", **The Globe Magazine**, Toronto, September 28, 1968, p. 6.
25. **The Globe**, Toronto, April 30, 1875.
26. Mellen, p. 146.
27. Ibid., p. 146-147.
28. Ibid., p. 147.
29. Lee, p. 11.
30. Linda Shapiro, Editor, **Yesterday's Toronto 1870-1910**, Coles Publishing Co., Toronto, 1978, p. 93.
31. Robert Sward, **The Toronto Islands**, Dreadnaught, Toronto, 1983, p. 43.
32. **The Globe and Mail**, Toronto, April 2, 1960, p. 8.
33. Ibid., p. 8.
34. Ibid., p. 9.
35. p. 9.
36. The land value to-day? In 1955, Metro Toronto paid $94,500 for 18 acres of High Park south of Grenadier Pond to build the Queensway Extension. In 1960 High Park was estimated to be worth c. $ 3M, and by 1980 a conservative figure is over $20M.

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37. **The Globe and Mail**, p. 9.
38. The High Park restaurant operates to-day without a liquor licence, complying with Howard's request that no intoxicating liquor ever be served in the park. Repeated attempts to lift this condition have been refuted and the ban on alcohol upheld. 39. **Picturesque And Industrial Galt**, Jaffray Brothers, Galt, 1902, p. 19.
40. Ibid., p. 19.
41. Ibid., p. 20.
42. Ibid., p. 20.
43. Ibid., p. 21.
44. Ibid., p. 21.
45. Ibid., p. 22.
46. This background information on Kitchener is taken from various records supplied by the City of Kitchener Parks and Recreation Department by Thos. Clancy, Director of Parks.
47. Paul Tiessen (Editor) Berlin Canada - **A Self Portrait of Kitchener**, Ontario before WW I, p. 186.
48. **Kitchener-Waterloo Record**, October 4, 1966.
49. **K.W. Record**, September 20, 1956.
50. **K.W. Real Estate News**, June 2, 1978.
51. Bob Duff, "**Early Beginnings**," unpublished history of the London Public Utilities Commission, 1974, p. 1.
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54. L.N. Bronson, **London Free Press**, March 8, 1978.
55. **Early Beginnings**, p. 3.
56. R.B. Haig, Ottawa, **City of The Big Ears**, Haig and Haig Publishers, Ottawa, 1970, 1961, p. 64.
57. **The Citizen**, Ottawa, January 1, 1861.
58. Ibid.

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59. Nepean Point was officially named in 1867 to commemorate Sir Evan Nepean, a public servant in the British Colonial Service who designed the plan for a second British American Empire in Canada after the American Revolutionary War.
60. Michael Newton, **Lower Town Ottawa**, Volume 2, 1854-1900, Manuscript Report 106, National Capital Commission, Ottawa, 1981, p. 275.
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4 THE SIGNIFICANT DECADES

Neither recreation, in the specific sense of amusement, nor education, even under its most attractive guise, but refreshment, pure and simple for body and mind is the primary office of the public park.

C.S. Sargent, 1890

The 1880's can be considered the watershed in the public parks movement in Ontario. The social conditions of the previous decade carried forward into the 80's not only resulted in the passing of Canada's first public parks legislation in 1883, but also in the birth of Canada's national park system, the legislation protecting Niagara Falls, and the establishment of Ontario's first provincial park, well before the turn of the century.

All of these event's evolved in part from the growing public concern for resource conservation as the result of wanton exploitation of forest resources in both United States and Canada, particularly in the Ottawa Valley in Ontario, coupled with a recognition of the need for urban open spaces to avoid the problems of the large American and British cities characterized by overcrowding and frequent epidemics.

The public interest in the preservation of lands for recreation was reflected in popular pastimes and entertainment. This was the period of the steamboat excursion offering picnics and moonlight cruises, as well as flourishing summer resorts and it witnessed the arrival of the tourist industry in Canada.

While the public park movement was at a turning point in Ontario and Canada, the need for recreational open space was reaching an emotionally-charged level in Britain, with workers demanding more parklands through demonstrations, strikes and riots. Meanwhile, even with the establishment of Central Park in New York and Fairmount Park in Philadelphia, there was little interest in the lack of public recreational grounds and open space in the large and growing American cities until well into the 1870's, at a time when many relatively small towns and cities in Ontario had set aside land for public park uses.

This chapter provides an overview of the circumstances and events that led to the passing of the Public Parks Act in

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1883 in Ontario against a background of the British and American experience. The origins and unfolding of public parks for Port Arthur is outlined in some detail, this being the first city in Ontario to establish a Board of Parks Management under the terms of the Public Park Act.

The British Experience

As urban conditions worsened in Victorian Britain, with unpaved streets, no sewers, decrepit housing badly ventilated and over-crowded lived in by those who endured 12-14 hour working days, child labour, and a total lack of fresh air and public open space, the ranks of the crusaders for public parks grew. Eventually, "the 'humbler classes' became sufficiently organized and vinegary to plead their case for urban greenery in the streets and squares, and even in the exclusively middle class parks of London."[1] Parliament was stirred to debate the issue raising such questions as "will open-park space satisfy such demands and reduce a propensity to riot, or merely provide additional spaces for these evils to recommence?"[2] The controversy was sufficient to stir the industrial 'robber barons' to initiate steps to provide public open space for the labouring classes. Of course, the capitalists were sufficiently astute to realize that healthy workers were more productive workers. But as Loudon stated in his **Gardeners Magazine** in 1835,

> *Public gardens . . . have originated in the spirit of the people, rather than in that of the government. On the continent, the contrary has usually been the case.*[3]

As further evidence of this people's movement, working people rioted in Hyde Park (London) in the summer of 1866, protesting the unwillingness of the Queen to develop new parks, and her restrictions allowing the common people to use Hyde Park only under strict limitations of clothing and conduct.[4] There are other examples of workers' riots and strikes in the cities of the Midlands, in which one of the major concerns was the lack of public recreation areas. So, reluctantly, the upper classes gave in to the demands of the working people. However, "had the first public parks not also been a good investment financially there can be little doubt that many fewer would have been laid out."[5] **The Recreation Grounds Act** was passed by Parliament in 1859, followed by the **Public Health Act** in 1875, in which one section referred to recreation. In 1865, the Commons Preservation Society was established, and by 1883 the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association was founded and promoted the **Disused Burial Grounds Act** of 1884 and the Open Spaces Acts a few years later. By the 1870's, the public parks movement was embraced in all parts of the country, assisted by the donation through philanthropy of many open spaces for public recreation purposes.[6]

While controversies arose at the local level as to the merits of public parks in Ontario there was certainly no semblance of strikes or riots. Certainly the debates appear to have been heated, particularly in the larger city of Toronto, but the development of parks in Ontario appears to have been accepted over time with a rather passive attitude. Philanthropy played a strong role in the donation of parkland by private citizens, as in Britain, as did the role played by influential leaders in the various communities.

The American Experience

The public park movement emerged in the United States for reasons similar to those which instigated the British movement, but despite the establishment of Fairmount Park in Philadelphia (1855) and Central Park in New York (1858), there appeared to be no general public concern over the lack of public parks until well into the 1870's. As of 1870, there were only three well-developed parks in America, but by the century's close, virtually every major city had at least one.[8] This is remarkable, considering that the population of Boston in 1870 was over 250,000 persons, Philadelphia 674,000 persons, Chicago almost 300,000, and New York over 942,000 persons.

Public parks were introduced into American cities as a manifestation of an anti-urban ideal that focused on relief from the moral turpitude of the city by escaping to a rural haven. To many, rural life was seen as an ideal, and the town as something to leave behind in the search for individual freedom. The country has always symbolized peace, security, simplicity, fresh air, tranquility, stability, friends and family as opposed to the sin and sloth of the overcrowded and inhumane cities.

The ownership of land played a very strong role in the personal aspirations of the early American settlers, and indeed continues to be important. As French states, "what belongs to everybody seems to belong to nobody. A frontier society, fearful of intruders, rigorously protective of private property and independent choice cannot easily adapt to an open, give and take urban structure, more common to Europe or the Middle East. Therefore, the American city has grown and developed through most of the twentieth century without any real sense or even acceptance by the people who occupy it."[9]

The lag in implementing the urban planning practices of Europe in the type of urban settlements common to the North American colonies was considerable, and would seem to be attributable to the "strangeness of the environment, the slowness of communications, the absence of traditions, the lack of institutional patterns, and the necessity to create anew even the most elementary of urban services and facilities — all contributed to prevent the speedy and complete transfer to the New World of what had been learned about city planning in the old."[10]

Other factors affecting the quality of urban development in this early settlement period were the lack of concern on the part of local governments for planning, and the almost free hand given to the private sector whose major concern was a generous financial return, both of which contributed to a mediocrity in planning and site quality. As a result, little concern was given to the open space and the social concerns of the urban environment. Fueled by an unbridled entrepreneurial spirit, the newly-emerging urban areas could hardly be described as the epitome of environmental integrity.

The development of public parks was slow to gain momentum: Due primarily "to the general weakness and corruption of municipal government in America during the nineteenth century" urban centres failed to cope with the lack of public recreational space.[11] However, by the latter quarter of the 1800's, most of the major cities were finally establishing park systems, as shown in the following table.

Table 2
Public Park Acreage of Cities in USA

District	**1877**	**1897**
Baltimore	600 ac.	1,116 acs.
Chicago	216	310
Cleveland	91	1,222
Minneapolis	700	1,522
Wilmington	3	254
Washington		405
Boston		2,270*
St-Louis		2,000

* In addition, The Boston Metropolitan Park Commissioners controlled 8,000 acs. in the regional suburbs.

As an interesting contrast, by 1897 Toronto had acquired 1,100 acs., Montreal 660 acs. and Quebec City 177 acs. of public parkland.

Unlike the parks movement in Canada, the pressure for public parks in the U.S.A. seems to have arisen in the late 1880's. Charles Robinson, a well known author and civic critic at the turn of the century, reported that in 1869 there were only two well-advanced rural parks in the whole country, and only twenty by 1886. However, the park acreage in the twenty-five principal American cities doubled in the ten years between 1888 and 1898, adding confirmation to the belief that, "except in the larger (cities), the rise of a "general" interest in park development had manifested itself only within a decade.[12] Robinson estimated that about half of the urban parklands had been acquired by gift, and for the balance, "the initial demand is apt to come from the more enlightened, travelled, and prosperous members of the community."[13]

The City of Boston, displaying a sense of creativity and enlightenment created the Metropolitan Park Commission in 1893, and proceeded to establish a general plan and act on it. At an expenditure of ten million dollars, the Commission developed a comprehensive open space system including eight miles of ocean frontage, 7400 acres of forest reservation, control of most river banks, developed parkways and boulevards to link various public park areas in the Boston region.[14]

The interest and sense of civic beautification in public parks led to the establishment of the Park and Outdoor Art Association at a convention in Louisville, Kentucky in May, 1897. The membership fee was fixed at two dollars a year for "all persons who desire the advancement of art out-of-door, including landowners, park officers, village improvement societies and the like."[15] The attendance at the inaugural meeting was comprised

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of 107 leading park commissioners, landscape architects, engineers, and horticulturists of the period including C.S. Sargent, John C. Olmsted, Warren H. Manning, L.H. Bailey, Charles H. Miller and Charles Eliot.[16]

Slow to gain momentum, the park movement in the U.S.A. had fully emerged by the early 1900's, and in many instances moved ahead of the Canadian and Ontario movement. But the need in the U.S. cities was obviously greater and this accelerated pace was not entirely a surprise.

The Conservation Movement (Upper Canada)

Ontario (Upper Canada) was settled by people raised in a cautious, conservative environment, "but here they became a new people with, a new character. This continent released their energies; freedom, initiative and self-reliance blossomed, as did warm sympathy, classless equality and intense regional group loyalty. It also released a ruthless competition, a get-rich-quick morality and wasteful destruction of natural resources."[17] There was only one goal for the early settlers, the clearing of land for farming, which led them to the pristine forest to speed the process. The concepts of soil fertility and conservation were ignored, if even recognized, and the destruction of so much timber did not become a general concern until the latter part of the nineteenth century. This concern grew out of the earlier writings of Thoreau and George Perkins Marsh, both based on the new world of biology uncovered by Darwin's **Origin of The Species** in 1859. Out of this awakening the conservation movement was born in both the United States and Canada.

National Parks

Canada's first national park was established in the early years of the resource conservation period. The immigration policies of the Federal Government had opened the west to coloni-

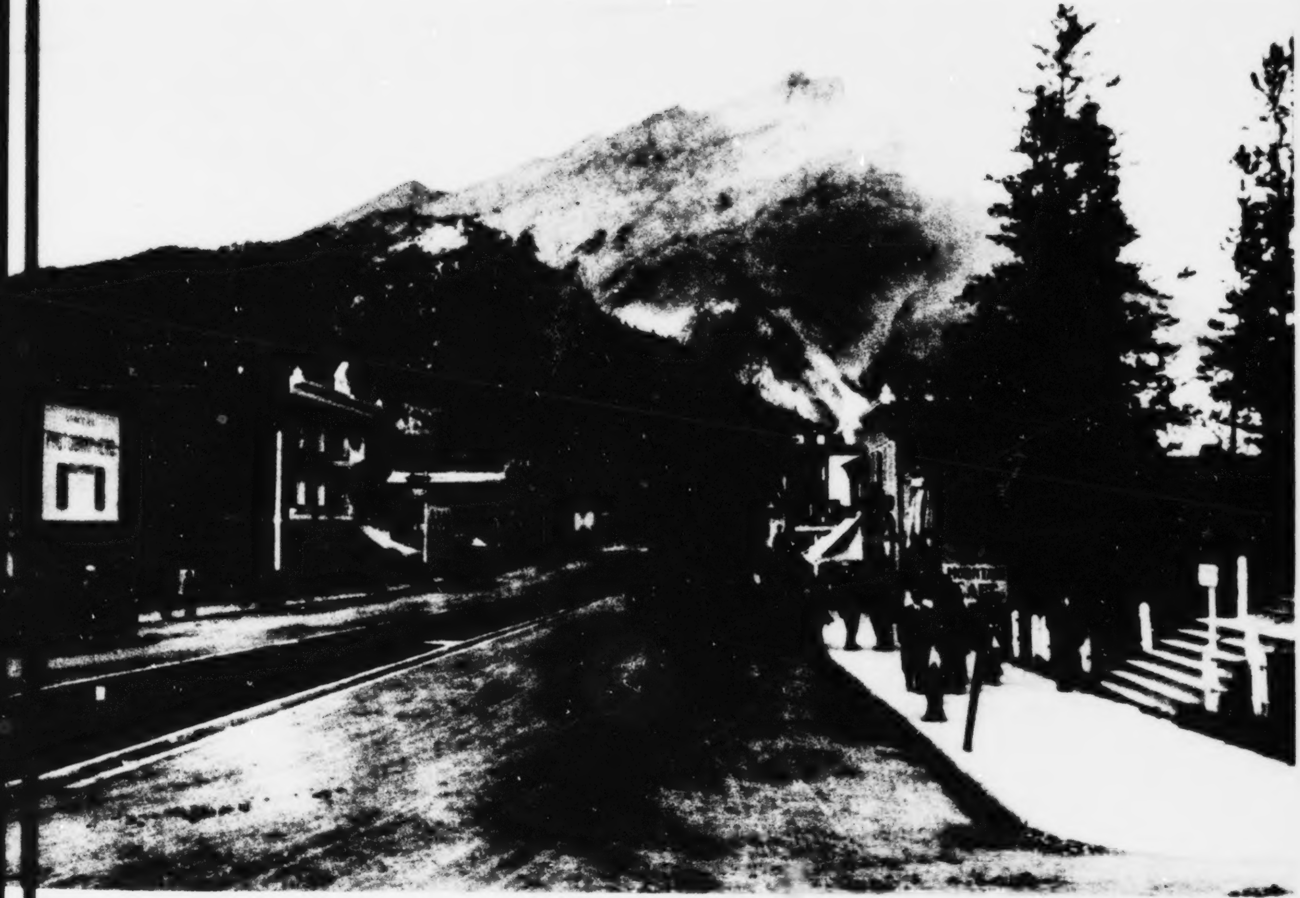

Fig. 4.1 Banff, Alberta, Townsite. c. 1913. Public Archives Canada.

zation after Confederation and on the discovery of a Rocky Mountain site with "all the qualifications necessary to make it a great place of resort"[18] with outstanding scenery, curative waters, a pleasant climate, and opportunities for prairie and mountain sport. By Order-In-Council on November 28, 1885, an area of about ten square miles on the northern slopes of Sulphur Mountain (Banff) was set aside by the Federal Government for future use as parkland. **The Rocky Mountains Park Act** received Royal assent on June 23, 1887 as a tract of land was "reserved and set apart as a public park and pleasure ground for the benefit, advantage and enjoyment of the people of Canada. . ."[19] While there is evidence of the recognition of the scenic wonders of this mountain area, "the early development of the park was geared to the creation of a resort area"[20] (Fig. 4.1).

The early concept of such parks was that they were in such a primitive condition that they would need improvement to "make a park." In effect "Canada's national park policy was grounded in the belief that the parks were a natural resource themselves, or a composite of natural resources, capable of exploitation under government regulation in a partnership of government and private enterprise."[21] Canada's national parks were to be "useful" and were seen as direct contributors to the National Economic Policy of the MacDonald Government as outlined in 1878, and implemented with only minor variations until 1930. The emerging conservation forces of this period did not envision the stoppage of resource utilization, but encouraged the wise and 'useful' use of resources. By the turn of the century, the national park concept was established with the reservation of six mountain parks.

First Provincial Parks

In Ontario, the destruction of the forests resulted in a drying up of waters that had been protected by the forests, an increase in man-made fires, the spread of diseases in the forests and the upsetting of the balance of nature, in some cases leading to the extinction of some species of wildlife.[22] These concerns led to the setting up of a Royal Commission on Forest Reservation and of A National Park in 1893 with the aim of optimizing timber production through scientific management, "such as has hitherto been but little practiced on this side of the Atlantic."[23]

Based on the recommendation of this report, Ontario's first provincial parks, Algonquin and Rondeau, were founded. Algonquin Park was set aside on the findings of the Kirkwood report which recommended a Forest Reservation and National Game Preserve in Ontario. This preserve was intended:

1. to maintain the water supply;

2. to preserve the primeaeval forest;
3. to protect the wildlife;
4. To undertake experiments in forestry;
5. to make provision for health and recreation;
6. to secure for the supporting regions the advantages of climate and water supply that retention of a large block of forest could give.[24]

The province moved quickly and in 1893 established Algonquin Park, and followed up in the next year in setting aside Rondeau Park on the shores of Lake Erie. Over the next forty years, only four more provincial parks had been created, Burlington Bear (1907), Long Point (1912), Presqu'île (1922) and Ipperwash (1932).

The Act establishing Algonquin stated that the vast reserve of c. 1900 square miles was intended to serve "as a public park and forest reservation, fish and game preserve, health resort and pleasure ground for the benefit, advantage and enjoyment of the people of the Province."[25] In effect, the park was to serve the dual purposes of conservation and recreation. But the founders of Algonquin were concerned primarily with the preservation of water, forest and wildlife resources, while recreation was viewed as a by-product of the park setting. Alexander Kirkwood, Chairman of the Royal Commission that recommended the establishment of the park, understood recreation to mean cottage rentals and the admission of fishermen to the forest trails, while no hunting or trapping would be permitted. There was no vision of outdoor recreation as we know it to-day. Rather, Kirkwood viewed the park in terms of the British and European concept of a health or holiday resort with a few hotels like the New Forest in Hampshire. In this period, Algonquin Park was remote and inaccessible and virtually uninhabited except by lumbermen, trappers, hunters, and indians.[26] There were no roads or railroads through it, let alone a village or settlement. This was "one of the largest tracts of untouched forest now left within the limits of Ontario . . . this vast, solitary, romantic wilderness is as yet almost as little known as if it were in Labrador or on the Hudson Bay slope."[27] Suprisingly, the lumbermen approved of the park, since the headwaters of the streams would be protected for the loggers to float logs down. By keeping out visitors, poachers, fur-traders and trespassers, the park could be more easily safeguarded. In fact, for a number of years "more attention was paid to keeping unwanted people out than to encouraging the general public to visit the Park."[28] Almost twenty years were to pass before a visit to Algonquin Park became popular, and "down to World War I the attractions of Algonquin Park were chiefly enjoyed by American visitors and a few eccentric artists and nature-lovers from Toronto"[29] (Fig. 4.2).

Fig. 4.2 Summer in Algonquin Park, Joe Lake. c. 1919. Charlotte Whitton and John B. Whitton on left. Public Archives Canada/ PA 126396.

Rondeau Park

One year after Algonquin was established, Rondeau Park, on a peninsula jutting into Lake Erie, was set aside to preserve its sandy soil and its original carolinian forest cover, including the tulip tree, black walnut, butternut, sycamore, oak, maple and basswood, as well as many pines. In addition, the peninsula is a stop-over site for over 274 migrating birds, 79 of which nest in the park. The peninsula had been a popular picnicking ground as well as a duck shooting area in the fall seasons, and visitors were accommodated in a hotel built in the park site, in sharp contrast to the remote Algonquin sanctuary.

Origins of Summer Resorts and Cottaging

With the establishment of Banff in 1885, followed by Jasper Park and Lake Louise national parks, as well as the dedication of Algonquin park in 1893, access was provided to pristine nature. But such an opportunity was extremely difficult for most Ontario residents to realize, many of whom sought refreshment in summer resorts, private cottaging, while others took great delight in picnic excursions, and moonlight cruises on the many lake steamers.

One of the earliest residences built as a summer cottage in Ontario was erected in 1839 by Lord Sydenham, Governor General of Canada West, while in the same period former Lieutenant-Governor Maitland enjoyed a summer villa at Stamford, near Niagara Falls. But relatively few people in this early settlement period had either the time or the financial base to afford such a luxury. Only the retired British army officers living at Cobourg, and members of the Family Compact living at York, could consider such a venture. By the late 1850's, the Cobourg ex-officers had formed a hunting-fishing club on the southern shore of Rice Lake, producing "one of the earliest organized resorts in Ontario."[30]

By 1867, Charleston Lake, near Brockville, was a popular summer site for both steam-powered boats and sailing, and featured many boathouses. But it is to the residents of Toronto that the honours must go for setting the precedent in summer resort and cottage use in their travels to the St. Lawrence Islands, to the coastal resorts of Maine, and, on occasion, to Europe. Overnight accomodation was available at Niagara Falls, and by the 1860's summer residences were in evidence at Long Branch, Port Credit, Lorne Park, Oakville and Bronte, all between Hamilton and Toronto.[31]

Following these developments, the early 1870's witnessed "the real beginnings of most of Ontario's resort lands."[32] For instance, steamboat excursions were begun in the 1860's on the Muskoka Lakes, and, by 1971, they were also popular at Parry Sound. Access to the Muskoka Lakes, and the completion of the first road into the area as far as Huntsville, opened up the district to settlement. With vigorous Provincial Government promotion following the worldwide depression of 1873 an increasing number of settlers moved into the area, along with the lumbermen, so that by 1880 the population of the district doubled to a total of over 10,000 persons. Despite the claims of its promoters, arable soil was extremely limited, and the prime pine timber was virtually depleted or had been burned for agricultural clearing within twenty years. So before the turn of the century there was a growing recognition that the future of the district would be in recreation, in the business generated by summer resorts and private cottaging. By 1880, many Americans, as well as southern Ontario residents, had purchased land for cottage sites. After 1880, numerous hotels were constructed, and the number of visitors increased each year with the result that Gravenhurst, Bracebridge, and Huntsville were booming resort towns (Fig. 4.3).

With the coming in 1896 of an economic boom that lasted nearly two decades (until the crash of 1913), the Ontario resorts flourished.[33] The tourist industry had arrived for Canada by the early 1890's and with it the society resort:

> *This was the time when the cleavage between the classes, the distinction between fashionable society and a growing proletariat, first became marked.*[34]
>
> *Social divisions along economic, regional, ethnic, and religious lines appeared. This was true in the city, where rising values of real property fostered the segregation of the different classes from each other, but inevitably their strongest manifestation was at the summer resort.*[35]

A high social status was attached to the summer resort,

Fig. 4.3 Sunbathing at Beach. c. 1880-85. Public Archives Canada/ PA 12785.

which was accessible to only those of certain means. Areas such as Jackson's Point on Lake Simcoe, Grimsby and Niagara-on-the-Lake on Lake Ontario, and the Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence River catered to society as it visited the hotels, cottages and resorts. In a parallel development, Winnipegers had discovered Lake-of-the-Woods, the residents of south-west Ontario were attracted to the shores of Lake Erie and Lake Huron, and the Rideau Lakes were very popular with the residents of Brockville and Ottawa (Fig. 4.4 and 4.5).

The summer at the lake remained an experience for the privileged for many years, until the automobile and the prosperity of the 1920's began to change summer vacation travel patterns and open up Ontario to more and more visitors, so that by the 1950's travel for pleasure emerged as a primary recreational activity for the general public.

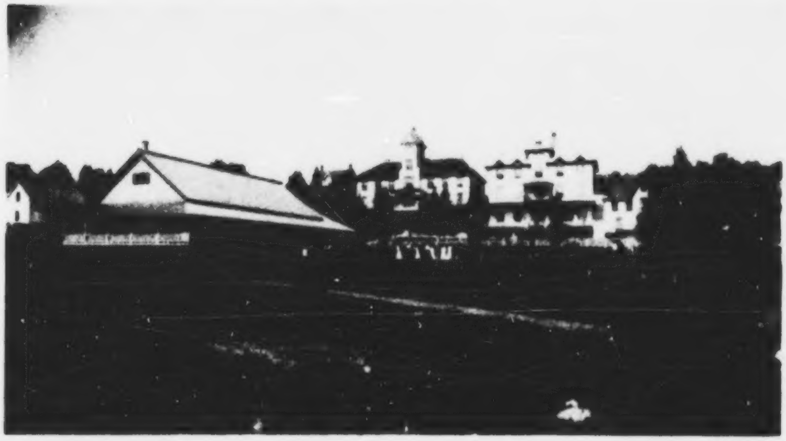

Fig. 4.4 The Montieth House on Lake Rosseau, Muskoka Lakes. c. 1905. Public Archives Canada/ PA 67312.

Fig. 4.5 Elgin House, Port Sandfield, Watching Base-Ball game, 1903. Ontario Archives 14777-36.

Steamboat Excursions

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, steamboat passenger service on Ontario Lakes reached its zenith, because "in the Victorian and Edwardian times the motor car, primarily a plaything of the well-to-do, had yet to come into its own, and was, as well, none too reliable as a means of transportation. This was the era of the inter-urban trolley and the excursion steamer as well, offering picnic and moonlight cruises."[36]

The Frontenac and the Queen Charlotte were the first steamers to be introduced to Lake Ontario (1814 and 1816).[37] While navigation of goods was well established on Lake Ontario, lake steamers did not venture further than Kingston until 1837, but shortly thereafter a combination steamer-stage run was established between Montreal and York. By 1848, the construction of the Lachine Canal permitted full water access for the entire route. "The fifteen years from 1840 to 1855 were the most prosperous in the history of steam navigation on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence."[38] By 1855, with the completion of the canal at Sault Ste Marie, the waters from the lower St. Lawrence to Lake Superior were navigable. However, with the opening of the Grand Trunk Railway in 1855, the days of the steamer as the principal mover of goods came to a close, and "the forerunners of the numerous pleasure craft appeared in the early 1870's."[39] The steamboat assumed a new role as a major tourist attraction for excursion and holiday cruises, and also provided a declining scheduled passenger service.

The major activity of the steamboat goods and passenger trade was conducted on Lake Ontario, particularly on the run between Toronto and Montreal, and Quebec City until the latter part of the 19th century when tourism and excursions became the main component of the lake service.

Before the turn of the century, Toronto was by far the most important port west of Montreal, being close to the Erie canal and American markets including New York. Toronto became the centre of ship-building and the home port for the largest ships. There were regular freight and passenger routes between Hamilton, Niagara, Buffalo, Rochester, Oswego, Ogdensburg, Prescott, Brockville, Kingston, Picton, Toronto. Of course, there were routes on the Upper Great Lakes as well, calling at Niagara, Penetang, Midland and Owen Sound.

The Ella Ross, an example of the excursion trade of the 1890 period, departed in Montreal on Wednesdays at 1:00 PM and, travelling overnight, reached Ottawa at 10:00 AM; then proceeded to Kingston via the Rideau Canal, arriving by Saturday afternoon. The three-day cruise, including meals and cabin accomodation cost $18.00.[40]

The Rideau passenger trade fluctuated greatly in the 1890's, but "from the turn of the century soared to levels unrivalled since the immigrant period, attaining a crest of nearly 28,000 bookings, in 1906."[41] In the early 1900's, as a result of the popularity of the cruise, increasing numbers of resort hotels and numbers of cottages were built along the Rideau water system. But except for a short-lived revival, the post-1910 decline continued until 1935 when the scheduled service was terminated, primarily because of competition from automobile (Fig. 4.6). Many cottagers reached their destination by steamer, travelling on the Kawartha Lakes, Muskokas and Lakes Couchiching and Simcoe prior to the advent of the automobile in the 1920's.

> *Undoubtedly the motor car was the prime factor in the languishing passenger trade after 1920, and perhaps a contributory one as early as 1910. Even as truckers and the railways cut into the Rideau freight business, so the motor car and motor coach between them finished off the passenger and excursion trade.*[42]

Steamships had been transporting people, freight and mail on the Muskoka Lakes since 1860 but, as on the Rideau, the railroads took over the commercial trade and the steamers assumed the role of tourist passenger carriers by the early 1900's. The 100-mile cruise, involving up to twelve ships, became very popular but with the depression of the 30's and the upsurge of the automobile, the lake business closed down by 1958. One of the last two steamships, the Segwun was restored by the Muskoka Steamship and Historical Society at a cost of $1.3 million and began a successful operation in 1981.[43]

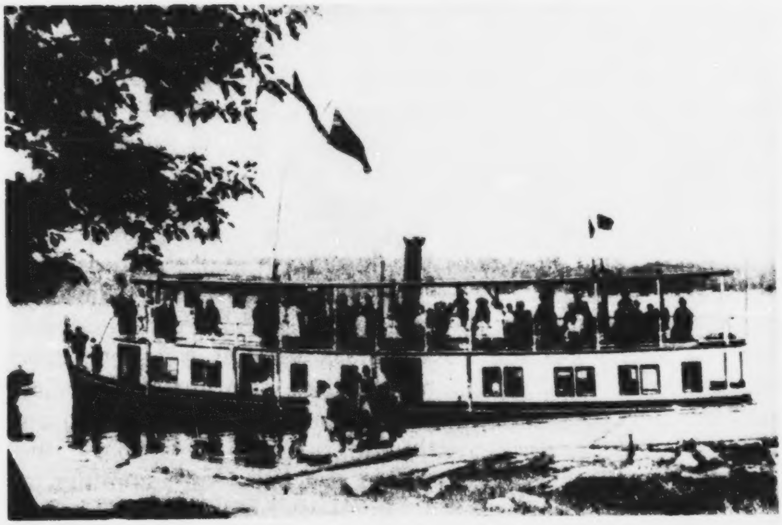

Fig. 4.6 Unidentified steamer on Trent Canal - a picnic excursion. c. 1900. Ontario Archives/ Acc. 14390-206.

Niagara Parks Commission

While there was a scattering of United Empire Loyalist settlers on the Canadian side of the Niagara River, settlement in the vicinity of the Falls began only after the war of 1812. The more settled political climate in the aftermath of the War encouraged a greater interest in the commercial potential of the area, so that by the early 1820's tourist travel increased rapidly and a local tourism industry was born. The completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 provided easy access to the region, and a visit to Niagara Falls became the "in thing" for American citizens.

One of the earliest entrepreneurs of the region was William Forsythe, an enterprising gentlemen who owned one of the hotels, who operated stage-coaches between Fort Erie and Queenston, and who held an interest in the ferry that operated below the Falls. With visions of monopolizing the entire tourist trade to the Falls, he erected a fence along the portion of the river banks from which a close view of the two Falls could be obtained. Unfortunately, the fence was erected on a sixty-six foot government reservation, and triggered off a conflict with the Government. After a costly litigation, Forsythe was forced to sell his business enterprises, leaving the access points of the river bank open for public viewing. Soon lake steamers connecting York and Niagara-on-the Lake were bringing in large numbers of visitors from Ontario, while American residents, arriving by stage-coach from Buffalo, were steadily increasing the visitor traffic. With visions of riches, a group of Canadian businessmen prepared a plan to create a city adjacent to the Falls, primarily for its financial return potential, but also with the secondary objective of protecting the Falls from commercial forces that might destroy the natural attributes of the site. The completion of a rail-line connecting the Falls with Buffalo and diverting American traffic from the Canadian side of the river, resulted in the growth of hotels and accommodation facilities on the American side of the river. With this move, the "City of the Falls" plans were shelved and the project abandoned.[44]

By the 1870's, "the area had become, to the huge profit and advantage of local business, the greatest tourist attraction in the Americas."[45] But the Falls had also become, for at least a generation, "The scene of unprincipled exploitation of the tourists by rapacious cabmen and others practiced in the art of polite robbery."[46] A change was imperative, and pressures were building for government control of the scenic wonder.

The first public suggestion for official action in establishing a public reservation or park at Niagara Falls was given by Lord Dufferin, Governor General of Canada from 1872 to 1878. He announced the idea in a 1878 speech to the Ontario Society of Artists:

> *. . . the Governments of New York and of Ontario or Canada should combine to acquire whatever rights may have been established against the public, and to form around the Falls a small public international park - not indeed decorated or in any way sophisticated by the puny art of the landscape gardener, but carefully preserved in the picturesque and unvulgarized condition in which it was originally laid out by the hand of nature.*[47]

However, credit for the original concept of a park reservation is attributed to Frederick Law Olmsted, Frederick E. Church, William Dorsheiner, and Henry Hobson Richardson.[48] Olmsted had been a frequent visitor to the Falls over a forty-five year period, and the records show that the idea was conceived by this group of gentlemen while rambling on Goat Island (which separates the Canadian and American Falls) in August, 1869. Church, the artist, ten years later persuaded

Urban Parks in Ontario

Wm. Hubbut, editor of the **New York Times**, to write to his friend Lord Dufferin and suggest the idea of a park to protect the unique scenic wonders of the Falls.[49]

Immediate action followed Dufferin's speech, and Olmsted and James T. Gardiner, Director of the State Survey of New York, were commissioned to report upon the measures necessary to set up a park reservation, and their recommendations were generally accepted by the State of New York and the Government of Ontario. To facilitate the Dominion Government's becoming involved in the preservation of the site, the Ontario Legislature passed an Act in 1880 entitled "**An Act Respecting Niagara Falls and the Adjacent Territory**."[50]

By 1885 it was clear that the Dominion Government had dropped any plans to develop a Canadian park. It appears that their complete lack of interest stemmed from Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald's concern that "national parks would be demanded in many places if a beginning were made at Niagara".[51] The Ontario Government, under Sir Oliver Mowat, having waited in vain five years for action by the senior level of government, and aware of the vigorous and positive steps taken by the State of New York in appointing a Park Commission, in 1885 passed **An Act for the Preservation of the Natural Scenery about Niagara Falls**.[52]

Three very capable Park Commissioners were appointed in the same year, and, based on their findings with regard to the task ahead, a further Act, known as the **Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park Act, was assented to by the Lieutenant-Governor on April 23, 1887**.[53] The 150 acre Victoria Park was opened to the public on May 24th, one year after the passing of the **Niagara Falls Park Act** (Fig. 4.7).

In the hundred or so years since the legislation affecting the Niagara Falls site was passed, the Commission has gained

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control of almost 3,000 acres, concentrated between Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie. From the original Queen Victoria Park, the Niagara Park Commission has evolved a truly outstanding park system, catering to almost 20 million visitors a year. Unique among its achievements has been the establishment of the School of Gardening, the only institution of its kind in North America.[54]

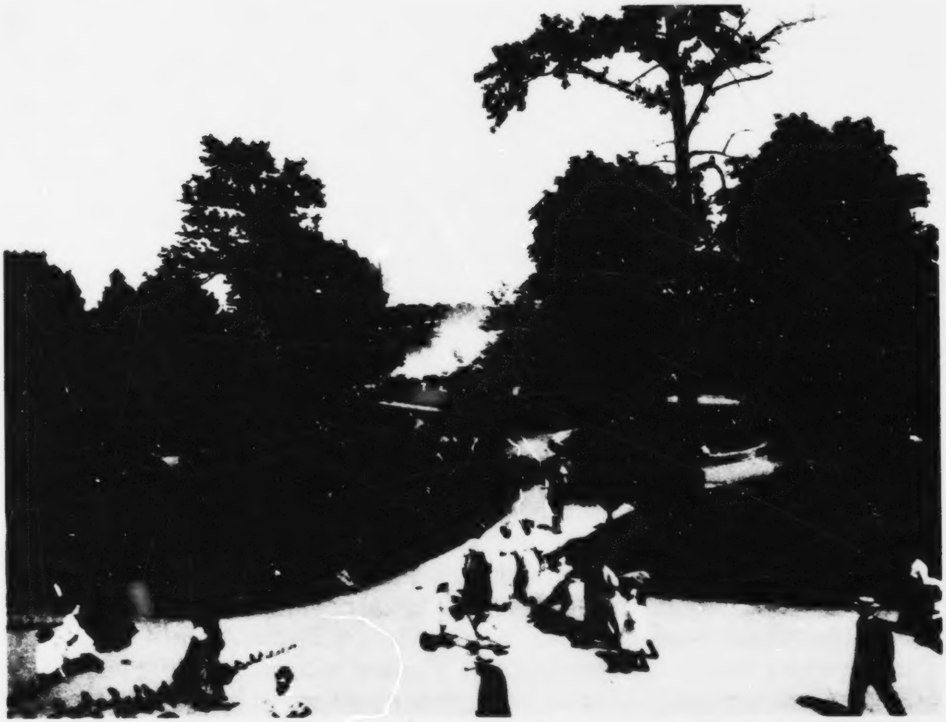

Fig. 4.7 Victoria Park, Niagara Falls. c. 1900. Niagara Parks Commission.

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The Public Parks Act, 1883 - Ontario

The first public parks act in Canada was given assent by the Ontario Parliament on February 1st, 1883, and was entitled **An Act To Provide For the Establishment And Maintenance Of Public Parks In Cities And Towns**, or, in its short title, **The Public Parks Act**, 1883. The Act provided for the establishment of a park, or a system of parks, avenues, boulevards, and drives as well as the maintenance of existing parks and avenues in any city or or town.[55] Such parks and other recreation areas in a municipality were to be open to the public free of all charges and were to be controlled and managed by the local municipality. On the passage of a local Public Parks by-law, a municipality was obliged to establish a Board of Parks management to administer and maintain parklands or such other improvements or ornamentation as "museums, zoological or other gardens, collections of natural history, observatories, monuments, or works of art."[56] The Board, which was to consist of the mayor and six other residents nominated by him, was given authority over any open street, but did not include existing exhibition or fair grounds belonging to the town or city. The members were given three year appointments, subject to reappointment by the council, with the chairman elected by the board from its members, and the secretary appointed from the board or from outside its membership.

The Act stipulated that land purchased or otherwise acquired by a parks board, should not exceed 1,000 acres in the case of cities, and 500 acres in the case of towns,[57] but land in excess of these acreages could be accepted as a devise or gift.[58] The board was also empowered to lease lands not immediately required for park purposes, and to sell or otherwise dispose of land not required for park purposes. Factors such as family composition, age, or education levels that might affect recreation activity levels and the amount of land required were not

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considered in park planning until relatively recent times. In fact, it has been only in the past twenty-five years that such social factors were seriously considered in such planning.

A council was authorized to assess the funds required by the Board, and to impose a levy which was not to exceed one-half mill on the dollar, such a rate being called "The Park Fund Rate." In addition, council could raise funds for land purchase by a special issue of municipal debentures.

A concern for health and hygiene was shown, however, in the prohibition of dogs from swimming and of the washing and cleansing of any cloth, wool, or leather-skin within one mile of a town's, or within three miles of a city's source of supply for such water-works.

This first **Public Parks Act for Ontario** is shown in Appendix A. The Act received scant attention in the Toronto papers of the day and did not even warrant any editorial comment. **The Toronto Daily Mail** reported that an amendment was made on the third reading of the bill, to "leave appointments of boards of park commissioners with councils without requiring nominations by mayors." The amendment failed (29-31) and the bill received third reading.[59] This lack of controversy would suggest that the concept of lands to be set aside for public recreation at the local level was generally an acceptable idea to the legislators and members of the press and presumably the general public.

The initiative for the **Public Parks Act** appears to have come from Mayor McMurrich and the members of Toronto City Council in November, 1882. The mayor urged a duplication of the Chicago Park Plan and its regional park areas, supported by a plan drawn up by the city engineer. He also urged that a board of park commissioners be appointed, and as McFarland states he "further recommended that the Ontario Legislature be petitioned for the necessary legislation."[60] However, in passage of the bill in 1883, Council did not adopt the Act, apparently wishing to retain full control in the management of the city's parks.

The Public Parks Act was amended in 1891 with the words "county, township or village" added after the words "city or town," wherever this appeared in the original Act, and this is shown in Appendix B. In effect, the authority to establish parks, avenues, boulevards and drives was extended to the other levels of local government with the passing of this amendment (54 Victoria, Chapter 44, May 4, 1891).

This amendment lends further credibility to the general acceptance of, and demand for public parks across the province, as part of the public parks movement.

As a further indicator of the apparent lack of enthusiasm or acceptance at the local level, the first Park Board was not set up for five years after the Act was passed by the Ontario Legislature. Port Arthur was the first Ontario municipality to take advantage of the Act in 1888, but its initial enthusiasm was soon dispelled, and the Board was dissolved in 1893, only five years after its inception, not to be formed again until 1908, as more fully described in the next section of this chapter. Ottawa was the next town to adopt the **Parks Act**, in 1893, followed by Kitchener in 1894, Hamilton in 1900, Brantford in 1901, and Sault St. Marie in 1911.

The development of parks in the former cities of Port Arthur and Fort William (Thunder Bay since 1970) form an interesting contrast in approach; Port Arthur was, as well, the first city in the province to adopt the Public Parks Act.

Port Arthur

Thunder Bay comprises the former communities of Port Arthur and Fort William, and is situated at the head of Lake Su-

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perior. Fort William evolved from a Hudson's Bay outpost in the early 1800's, and Port Arthur was established at a later date as a port and service centre for the region. Port Arthur was incorporated as a town in 1884, while Fort William retained the status of a township. Both municipalities were incorporated as cities on April 30, 1907, after many years of intense rivalry, and combined in January, 1970, to become the City of Thunder Bay, which has a current population of about 110,000 persons.

The first park site in the Thunder Bay area has a unique background. Mr. Hugh Wilson, serving as a surveyor of the Crown Lands Department, felt that a park was necessary in the central part of Port Arthur, comprised of several hundred dwellings. He designated the lot between Arthur and Waverley Streets, known as "Reserve C," as a park site, eventually to become known as Waverley Park.[61]

This designation occured as part of the town lot survey in 1871, thirteen years before Port Arthur was incorporated as a town, and twelve years before the first **Public Parks Act** was enacted in Ontario. It is of some interest to note that "the park was planned by southern Ontario politicians and surveyors who were from larger urban centres where the need for parkland was more obvious and immediate than in a tiny wilderness community surrounded by natural forest."[62] It was a case of the park preceding the town. Wilson, obviously a man ahead of his time, felt that the establishment of recreational facilities for the pioneer community was as important to the citizens as was the provision of other so-called essential services.

However, the community did not consider park development of any great importance, and the site remained vacant, the local cricketers being the only group using the lot. In 1880, at their annual meeting, the cricket club reported that "this park is only a park in name, and of course needs considerable improvement before a good ground could be made of it."[63] The club voted $50 towards the upgrading of the site, and asked Council for exclusive rights to the grounds. Council responded by voting funds for ground improvements, but did not grant sole rights to the club. Soon other events, such as baseball games and footraces, were being held in the park, building support for further improvement. In 1884 a public referendum was held to determine whether the parkland should be sold to a private group who would erect a sorely needed hotel or retained as a site for recreation purposes. Fortunately, the park supporters won the ballot.

Council finally became serious about the development of the park, and proceeded to have the land graded and fenced, to have trees planted and to have the grounds generally improved. However, with other civic improvements taking place, park development came to a standstill for almost a decade, despite the establishment of a parks board in 1888, the first such board in the Province. The ground conditions worsened until public pressure forced a review of the parks maintenance picture. Certain opposition arose because Waverley Park was Crown land, owned by the Federal Government, and it was felt that the Council should not undertake such an expense on federal land. This opposition was overcome and soon the park was restored to a much better condition, with Council approval of further maintenance funds.[64] In turn, Council pursued the question of ownership of the park and an ownership patent from the Crown was given in 1907, upon condition that the park "not be alienated or leased and that no buildings be erected on it except municipal buildings for the Corporation of Port Arthur."[65]

In these early formative years, park improvements resulted from the actions of vested interest groups, rather than from any long range park development plan for the town. The need for organized athletics facilities was emphasized in the park's early development, and it therefore contrasted sharply with the more traditional, ornamental public parks being established in the older southern Ontario communities in the same period.

Board of Parks Management

Acting upon a petition signed by 500 citizens Port Arthur was the first municipality in Ontario to establish a Board of Parks Management five years after the **Public Parks Act** of 1883 was passed by the Ontario Legislature. It is difficult to assess why the Board was appointed at that time, considering that the municipality boasted only one park and had few funds available for maintenance of the grounds. In fact, such was the apathy that the Board was disbanded in 1893. It would appear that the enthusiasm shown in the preliminary park development in 1887 soon flagged, leading to the demise of the Board. It was not until 1908, after a lapse of 15 years, that Port Arthur Council appointed a new Parks Board.[66] In the intervening years between 1893 and 1908, management of the town's parks was delegated either to a Parks Committee appointed by the town Council or to the Electric Railway and Light Commissioners. The new Board inherited eight parks and the city boulevards.[67]

Other Park Development

The emphasis of the Board over the next 12 years was on the "development of Current River Park into a multi-faceted recreation centre, maintenance of Waverley Park and the development of plans for the site and further land acquisition to expand the park system."[68]

In 1891, the newly-formed Parks Board turned their attention to the acquisition of additional parkland and expropriated several properties that by 1903 were amalgamated to form

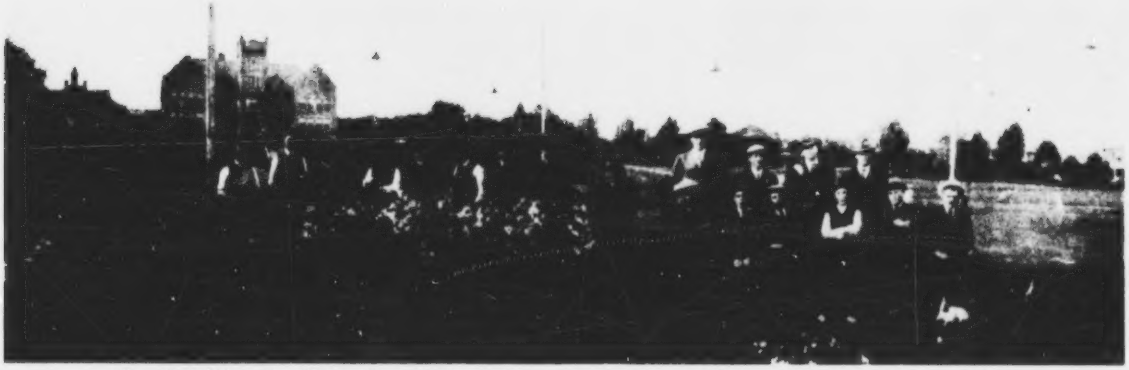

Fig. 4.8 Waverley Park, Port Arthur, showing members of Lawn Bowling Club. c. 1914. Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society 979.73.12.

1600-acre Current Park. Soon an outdoor dancing platform was proving popular, and in 1906 the Parks Committee constructed a wire enclosure to house the town's moose. A young cow moose was then offered to the town, and Council expressed hope that the cow might be added to the "city zoological gardens", comprised of one moose. Sadly, in 1914, the Board decided that the moose was too expensive to maintain, and the zoo's entire collection, the one animal, was released.[69] A dancing pavilion was opened to the public in Current River Park in 1907 to complement the existing grandstand and the facilities for soccer, organized baseball, and lacrosse.

Over the next several years, a major controversy arose over the function of Waverley Park, as the park had now become the centre of the residential area of the town and also provided a panoramic view of the harbour and lake (Fig. 4.8). As a result of rapid expansion and a building boom, pressures arose to build a new city hall on the site, a new high school, or other public buildings; Frederick Todd, the landscape architect from Montreal, was asked to report on the future use of the park, and agreed that the park could include space for a new library but his recommendation evoked considerable opposition from many citizens. This controversy forced the Parks Board to give serious attention to the future of the park and it stated that "no buildings could be constructed on the property."[70] However, the Port Arthur Collegiate was erected on the western portion of the site in 1909 (Fig. 4.9).

In the period before 1920, there seems to have been a continuous debate between members of Council and the Parks Board as to who had the right to use the park for what purpose, and as to who would be responsible for park maintenance. Certain members of the School Board were highly vocal in their attempts to gain access to the park for the athletic activities of the students of the adjacent High School. As one member of the School Board stated, "I think a playground is worth far more than all the flower beds you can lay out."[71] The park was being used by a lawn bowling club, as well as by other athletic groups at the time. Under pressure to allocate various clubs exclusive rights to specific areas of the park, the Board, in 1919, issued a policy that made clear that "recreation priveleges belonged to all citizens for all manners of activities and that the

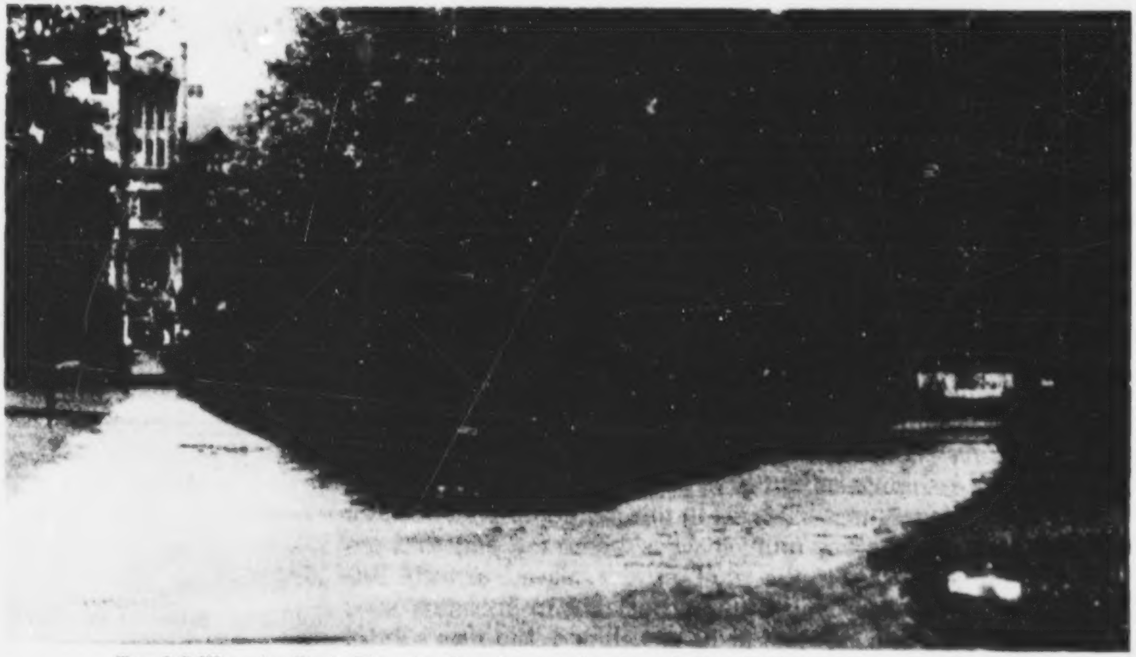

Fig. 4.9 Waverley Park, Thunder Bay, Layout developed after 1914 showing original paths, fountain and trees, 1984.

park was there for everyone's use and not just a select few."[72] However, the question of use and management of the park and the adjacent High School grounds continued until an agreement clearly defining use and maintenance cost sharing was achieved between the Board of Education and the Parks Board. The agreement was further expanded in subsequent years to clarify and to encourage cooperation between the two Boards in respect to the use of the adjoining park and school. This agreement would appear to be one of the first "park-school" agreements reached between a school board and a local municipality in Ontario.[73] Certainly, major concern for joint use of school-park properties did not become widely accepted policy in Ontario, nor indeed in Canada, until the 1960's.

In 1908, a disastrous flood wreaked havoc on Current River Park, necessitating the reconstruction of the entire site, including the dance and restaurant pavilions and several hundred feet of street railway track. The Electric Railway and Light Commission advised City Council that the loss of the dance pavilion resulted in a $2,000 loss of revenue in 1908, and that a new pavilion should be erected as soon as possible. As one of the Commissioners stated, "Everybody wants it, even the churches."[74] Council agreed, and the Parks Board opened the new pavilion in 1910. As the local newspaper reported, "dancing at Merry Night Park is now becoming the Fashion — and to be out of fashion is to be out of the world."[75] That the dance pavilion in the park was in vogue in this period, is evidenced by similar activities in many municipalities where the park and pavilion were connected to the city by street railway, as were Britannia Park in Ottawa and Sunnyside Beach in Toronto.

Current Park continued to be developed, but was subject to alienation through the sale and lease of a number of waterfront lots, so that by the early 1920's, "the Lake Superior

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waterfront was all but lost from view, forcing visitors from water-oriented activities on the lake waterfront, despite the protests of "Save the Park" deputations from groups like The Women's Civic League."[76] Similar experiences were occuring in other Ontario municipalities where valuable waterfront parkland was being lost to commerce and the railways.

One other innovation in Current River Park resulted in a local conflict. A new merry-go-round was installed in 1914 to the delight of children of all ages, but a major objection arose to its operation on Sunday, as "it was felt that it lured the children away from Sunday School."[77] Council passed a by-law in 1918 to respect these concerns after a deputation of ministers and Sunday School teachers expressed the deep concern "that the joy ride with its hurdy gurdy music be locked up on the Sabbath."[78]

By 1920, Current Park had been virtually developed, and it remains about the same today. As in many other municipalities, the Parks Board did not adhere to a comprehensive plan, but attempted to add features as they were conceived, which resulted in a mix of recreational opportunities, conflict, and loss of aesthetic appeal. As in most of Ontario's urban centres and other provinces in Canada, the basic land acquisition of public parkland in Port Arthur occured in the period between 1890 and 1920. It was not until the 1950's, after a lapse of 30 years, that acquisition of land for public parks began once more to be viewed as a major priority of local government in most Ontario municipalities.

Fort William

Fort William, incorporated by provincial legislation in 1892, recognized the need for public parkland much later than Port Arthur. The recognition began in 1901, with the acquisition of property for a cemetery and the appointment of a committee of council to take charge of the new cemetery. This committee was expanded in 1904 to become the Cemetery and Parks Committee after the town acquired its first park as a gift of land from Catherine Vickers, in memory of her deceased husband and two close family friends.[79] The 10-acre parcel of land was, of course, named Vickers Parks.

The Committee, with much enthusiasm, entered into a contract to clear, plant and grade the new park, only to discover that in their enthusiasm, the wrong site had been cleared! It seems that the 10-acres adjacent to the Vickers property had been developed.[80] In 1905, the proper site was cleared. The Cemetery and Parks Committee, renamed the Property Committee in 1904, continued to make a few minor improvements to Vickers Park over the next four years, but with no clear sense of direction, and the park was leased for cultivation in 1908 and 1909. The next year, the town's first Parks Board was established, with the first order of business being the development of Vickers Park. Over the next decade, the Board gave land acquisition top priority, despite the lack of a clear-cut mandate from the Council establishing their legal authority.[81] This constraint was in sharp contrast to the much greater activity of their neighboring rival Port Arthur.

The Fort William Parks Board secured the services of a Landscape Architect, W.H. McCauley, presumably from Toronto, to prepare a site plan for the park and, in accordance with the condition of the gift of land as a park, developed a non-active ornamental park, serving as a prototype for the type of the park subsequently developed in Fort William. Their approach contrasted sharply with that taken in Port Arthur, where the early development of parklands for sports and athletics was a precedent for later development.[82] The non-active park policy was reflected when the use of the playground in Fort William's

Dease park was restricted to children under eight years, following excessive damage to the park, which had been noted for its floral ornamentation.[83] W.H. McCauley, who had designed Vickers Park, also laid out Dease Park. It seems that certain tensions developed between the Parks Board and the more recently appointed Playgrounds Commission because of the damage caused by the children in summer playgrounds. The Parks Board felt that its prime purpose was to provide "parks for passive recreation and that protection of the aesthetic nature of the parks was of primary importance."[84]

The one other major park to be developed in the early 1920's was Chippewa Park, which ran along the Fort William waterfront. It consisted of 170 acres of land purchased from the Ojibway Indian Reserve in 1917 for $25,000, the land to be used for park purposes only, with a number of conditions, including free use of a phone at Squaw Bay by band members, and the right to cut timber along the roadway. The city could use the property for "amusement, play and recreational grounds, summer hotels, boarding houses, cottages and cabins," in short, for virtually any recreational purpose one might consider.[85]

Fort William's first swimming pool was built in 1910 as a fill and draw type, without a filtration chlorinator of any type. A by-law was quickly passed and posted to ensure that "All bathers must wear neck to knee bathing suits."[86]

A Contrast in Approach

The twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William provide a sharp contrast in community values, as reflected in the approach to park development. In addition, there were specific innovations in early recreational policies that were, in certain respects, ahead of comparable sized municipalities in the same period, in the older more established towns in southern

Ontario. This is quite remarkable and speaks well for the political leadership and general public maturity of the young and vigorous pioneer community which, of necessity, was deeply concerned with the economic well-being and growth of an emerging commercial centre in northern Ontario.

To a large degree, the development of public parks by Port Arthur for primarily active recreational purposes in the early 1880's was not characteristic of the type of park development of this period in southern Ontario towns nor of the major cities of the United Sates. On the other hand, the approach taken by Fort William was very typical of other Ontario municipalities, with the primary concern being on the beautification and aesthetic qualities of its public parks.

Summary and Conclusions

By the advent of the 1900's there was a general recognition in most of the settled sectors of southern Ontario that public parks at the local level were an important element in the life of towns and cities of the province. The Conservation Movement parallelled the local parks movement and was reflected in the establishment of Canada's first national and provincial parks as well as in the restoration and conservation measures taken to protect Niagara Falls. Along with these movements, resorts, cottaging and the excursion steamer became very popular as recreational diversions for a growing population with more time and spare dollars to participate in recreational pursuits beyond the urban limits.

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52. This Act, passed on March 30, 1885 (48 Vict. cap. 21), is also known by its short title as **The Niagara Falls Park Act**.
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63. **Thunder Bay Sentinel**, Port Arthur, April 9, 1880.
64. **The Daily News**, Port Arthur, May 9, 1906.
65. Ibid., March 13, 1907. The official patent was not received from the Deputy-Minister of Lands, Aubrey White, until February 26, 1912.
66. Margaret Thomson and Marlene Stirrett, p. 28.
67. The Board was given legal authority over:
    Current River Park, including Lot 7
    Waverley Park and the "Gore"
    Gravel Pit (park lot 10 S. Dawson)
    River St along McVicar Creek

St Patrick's Square
McVicar Square
Lot 15 - O'Brien Addition
Boulevards

68. Thomson and Stirrett, p. 29.
69. **The Daily News**, Port Arthur, April 24, 1906.
70. **The Daily News**, Port Arthur, August 26, 1910.
71. **The Daily News**, Port Arthur, May 14, 1912.
72. Port Arthur Board of Park Management minutes, May 14, 1919.
73. Minutes of Joint Meeting of the Board of Education and the Parks Board, November 5, 1918.
74. **The Daily News**, Port Arthur, June 19, 1909.
75. Ibid., July 20, 1910.
76. Thomson and Stirrett, p. 44.
77. **The Daily News**, Port Arthur, February 19, 1918.
78. Thomson and Stirrett, p. 46.
79. Indenture beween Catherine Mary Vickers of the City of Toronto, Grantor, and the Corporation of the Town of Fort Williams, Grantee, September 13, 1902.
80. Catherine Mary Vickers was the daughter of Susanna Moodie, northern pioner and author of **Roughing It In the Bush**.
81. Thomson and Stirrett, p. 27.
82. Ibid., p. 62.
83. Ibid., p. 63.
84. Ibid., p. 64.
85. Ibid., p. 70.
86. City of Fort William By-Law No. 1031, July 25, 1911. This was Dease Pool, built in Dease Park.

5 TURN OF THE CENTURY

It was characteristic of the Victorian era to assume that God made some people rich and others poor, that the wealthy could provide private parks and play-grounds for themselves, and the poor could do without. But other ideas are afoot these days. . .

Cobourg Sentinel Star, 1896

After 1881 the urban population rose considerably so that, by 1911, over half of Ontario's residents lived in incorporated places, as opposed to less than one-third in 1880.[1] The greatest change was in the decline of the hamlets and small villages, many disappearing or reduced to a few buildings at rural crossroads, primarily as a result of the loss of local industries, and "the large towns and cities grew at the expense of the smaller ones."[2] Although the miseries brought on by this industrialization could not be compared to those of Britain, nevertheless there were injustices to many, especially to women and children. But as Glazebrook states, "for Ontario — and for Canada as a whole — there was no public outcry and no individual voice or pen to depict in striking colours the miseries of those men, women, and children who were caught up in the grinding wheels of the factory system."[3]

Recreational interests had grown and expanded, with many libraries and book shops; motion pictures were becoming rather common; the travelling circus and fall fairs (Fig. 5.1) were not to be missed; first-class travelling theatrical and musical groups were well attended; men's clubs were fashionable for the well-to-do in the larger cities; a great majority of urban men belonged to a fraternal club or lodge of some type; roller skating was introduced in 1863 for "the educated and refined classes" at Newport, Rhode Island, soon swept the USA and later Ontario; and rinks were built in every town and new city.

The bicycle craze began in the spring of 1870, and there were so many bicycle accidents that pressure was mounting from injured and worried citizens (Fig. 5.2). When the list of injured was presented to the Legislature, it appeared that most of the injured were lawyers. One politician commented, "Well, this proves that the bicycle riders are doing some useful work."[4] The widespread popularity of the bicycle in this period is made

Fig. 5.1 Port Hope, Town Park; Walter L. Main Circus, Aug. 31, 1898. Ontario Archives/ S 16069.

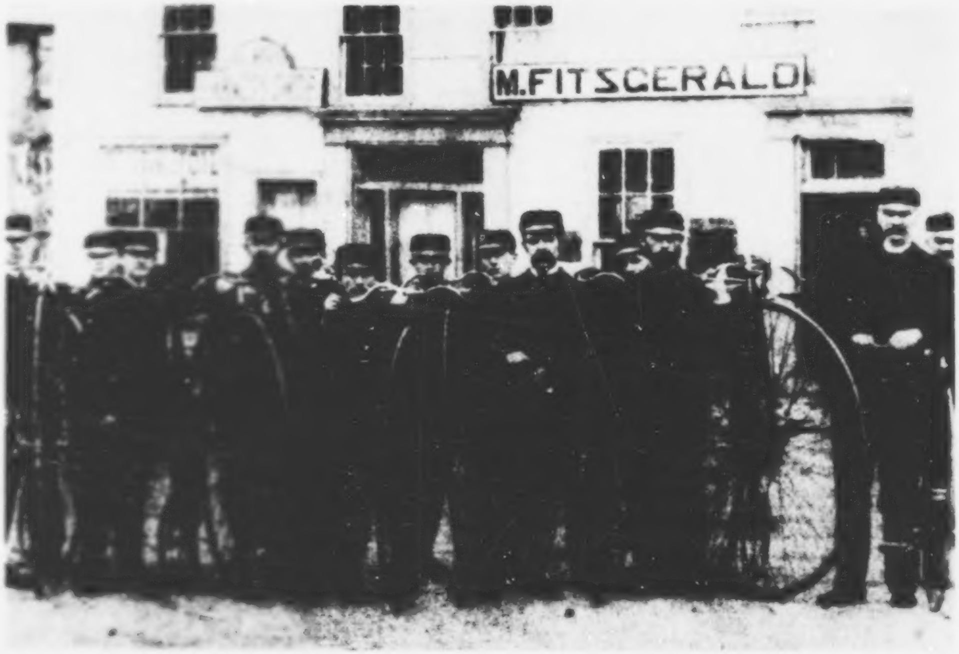

Fig. 5.2 Stratford Bicycle Club taken on Wellington St., May 24, 1886 before leaving for Woodstock. Beacon Herald, Stratford, Ontario.

Fig. 5.3 Children watching a gentleman repairing a bicycle. c. 1890. Public Archives Canada/ C 79303.

Fig. 5.4 Picnic: Scarborough Heights. c. 1900. Ontario Archives/ S 14156.

evident by the amendment of the **Act to Regulate Travelling on Public Highways and Bridges** of April 13, 1897 introduced to clarify the right of way of persons travelling by bicycle (Fig. 5.3). The amendment made legal the obligation to keep to the right when meeting, or being overtaken by another bicycle. The increasing number of bicycle accidents prompted the **Act Relating to Bicycle Paths**, also assented to on April 13, 1897 by the Ontario Legislature, which gave permission to municipalities to set aside as much of any highway or road or street, as they liked "for the purposes of a bicycle path," and "if a person rides a horse or other beast of burden over such bicycle path he shall incur the penalties imposed by the **Act to Regulate Travelling on Public Highways and Bridges**."[5] This Act appears to be the first legislation in Ontario applied to bicycle rights-of-way.

Steamboat excursions were very popular; dance halls, although popular, were still viewed as "branches of Satan's den" by many "respectable" people; band concerts and picnics (Fig. 5.4) in the park retained their popularity, except on Sundays as evidenced by an editorial in a Toronto newspaper in 1898:

> *It was proposed to employ a band to play in Queen's Park every Sunday afternoon, but this idea was voted down in Council, though I confess I see no possible objection to it, except that it would be a welcome diversion to the working man. But it would also be a source of attraction to children who are otherwise penned up in a stifling Sunday School, having dry as dust texts sweltered into their little bodies.*[6]

While horse racing continued to be highly popular (Fig. 5.5) there was great interest across the province in lacrosse, cricket, baseball, football, tennis and rowing. Skiing was a

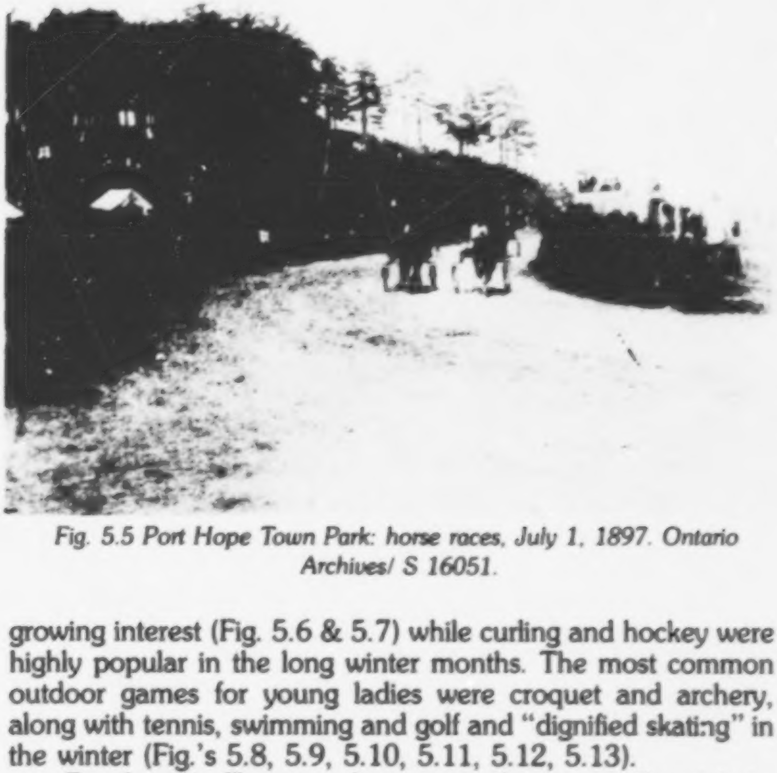

Fig. 5.5 Port Hope Town Park: horse races, July 1, 1897. Ontario Archives/ S 16051.

growing interest (Fig. 5.6 & 5.7) while curling and hockey were highly popular in the long winter months. The most common outdoor games for young ladies were croquet and archery, along with tennis, swimming and golf and "dignified skating" in the winter (Fig.'s 5.8, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.12, 5.13).

For those in Toronto who were in the "proper" social circle, and who had more than adequate means, life was full of activity at the turn of the century.

> *The parks resounded with brass bands. Boat houses and rowing clubs lined the lake front. Dance pavillions, ice cream parlours and amusement parks were packed with people. The beaches were over-*

> *flowing with families determined to cool off. And always, around the first of June, the servants of the city's aristocracy began the elaborate preparations necessary to move their masters' households to their elegant summer houses situated at the Toronto Islands, Balmy Beach, Burlington Beach, Long Branch and Oakville. For lovers, there were moonlight excursions on coal burning steamers like the Chippewa and the Cayuga where they danced to the strains of Sweet Adeline.*[7]

While the activities in the parks were unstructured and informally organized, there was considerable activity, contrary to a modern belief that the original parks were totally "passive" in nature. However, such limited activity as this was not adequate, nor indeed appropriate, to the development of children who could benefit through proper leadership in arts, crafts and organized games. Thus arose a pressure for children's playgrounds as described in this chapter.

In addition to the advent of playgrounds came the amusement parks, virtually an outgrowth of the seaside resorts of Britain or the earlier pleasure gardens of Britain and Europe, Britannia Park in Ottawa providing an example of a typical amusement park of the period.

The concern for adequate design of the newly acquired public parks of the latter 1800's provided opportunities for the practice of landscape architecture. One of Canadas first resident landscape architects, a protegé of the internationally renowned Frederick Law Olmsted, was Frederick G. Todd who established a consulting practice in Montreal in 1900. Several of his major contributions are described in this chapter through his involvement in Ottawa and Stratford in the early years of his practice in Canada.

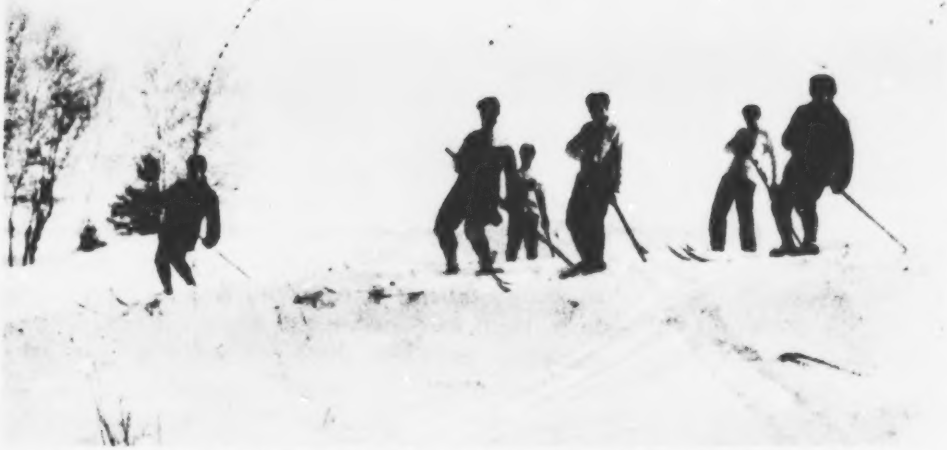

Fig. 5.6 Skiing, Rockcliffe Park, Ottawa, 1895. Public Archives Canada/ C 43152.

Fig. 5.7 Ski-joring, Limberlost Lodge, Muskoka. c. 1900. Public Archives Canada/ PA 43656.

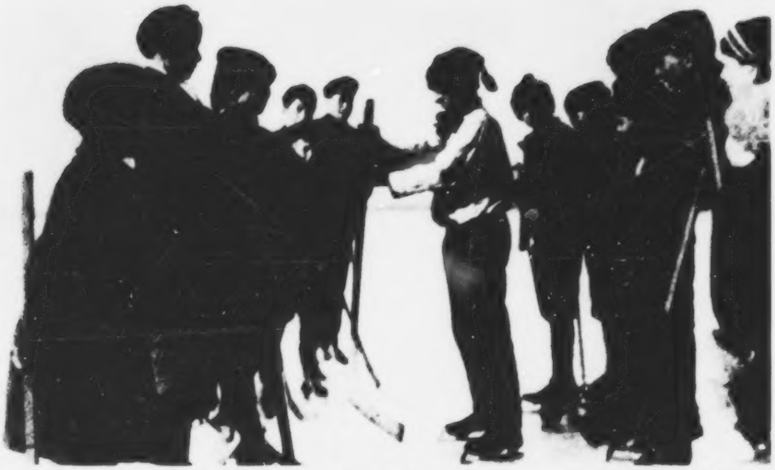

Fig. 5.8 Boys choosing sides for hockey on Sarnia Bay, Dec., 1908. Public Archives Canada/ PA 60732.

Fig. 5.9 Tennis anyone? Friede, 1909. Public Archives Canada/ C 21171.

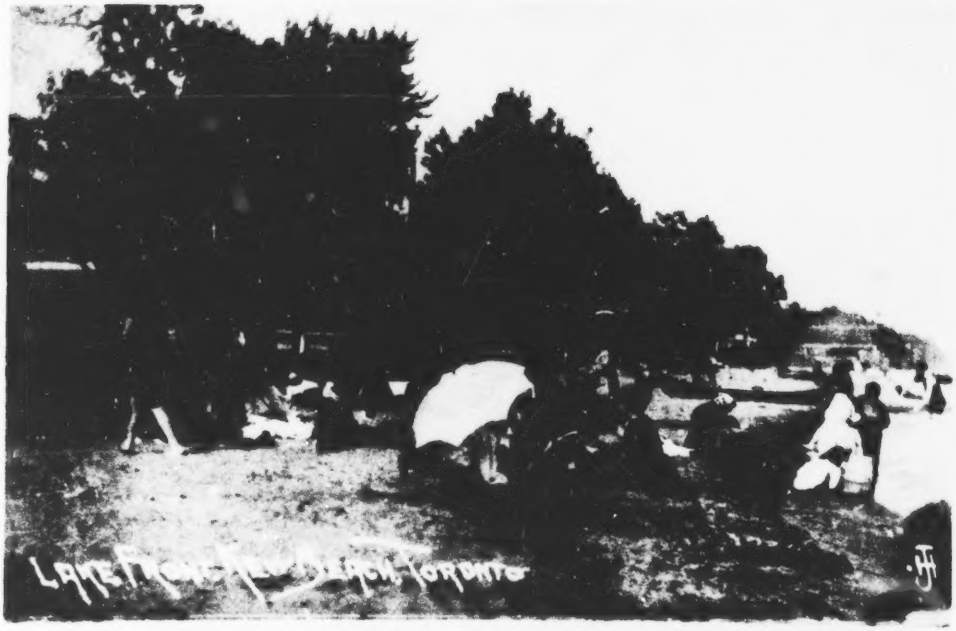
LAKEFRONT, KEW BEACH, TORONTO

Fig. 5.10 Lakefront, Kew Beach, Toronto. c. 1911. Ontario Archives/ S 2771.

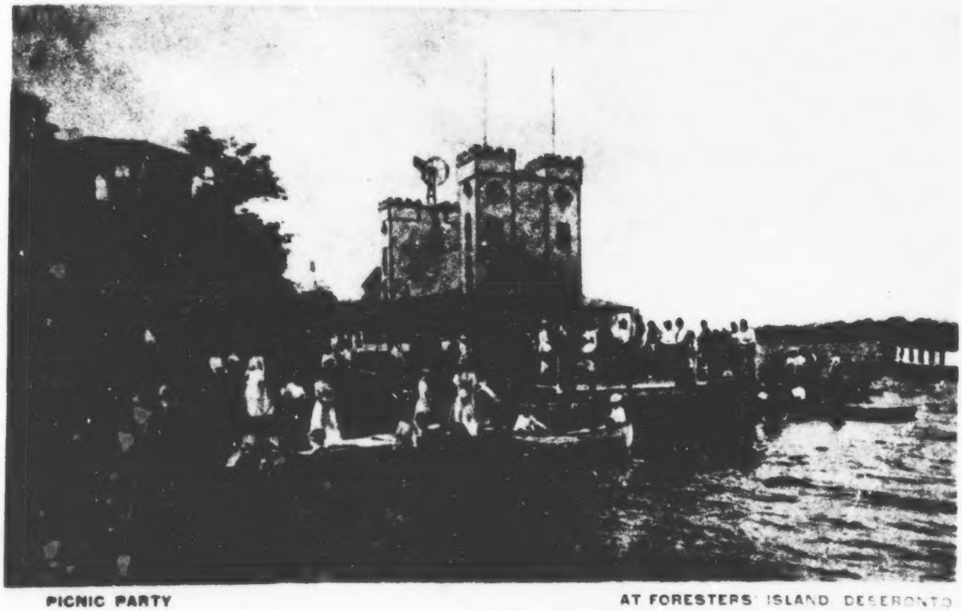
PICNIC PARTY
AT FORESTERS' ISLAND, DESERONTO

Fig. 5.11 Deseronto: Foresters' Island: picnic party. c. 1900-1910. Ontario Archives/ S 7405

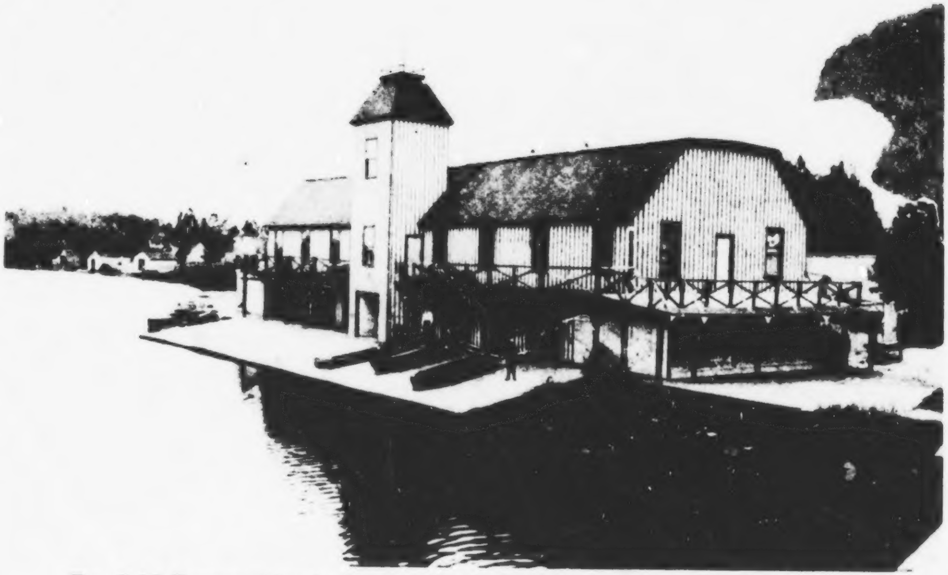

Fig. 5.12 Toronto Islands: Centre Island: English's Boathouse. c. 1910. Ontario Archives/ S 13680.

Fig. 5.13 "Dignified" skating. c. 1908-10. Public Archives Canada.

Early Playgrounds

The National Council of Women, established in 1893, is recognized as the motivating force behind Canada's first supervised playgrounds.[8] The Council's objective was to "unite in Dominion Federation for the betterment throughout Canada of conditions pertaining to the family and the state, all societies and associations of women interested in philanthropy, religion, education, literature, art or social reform."[9] The positive values of pleasure were discussed at the 1896 annual meeting as an antidote to slothful living. Reacting to the idea of supervised playgrounds advocated by the National Council of Women, the City of Ottawa dedicated eleven sites known as the Ottawa Ward Playground as recreation areas in 1898 on the condition that there would be no cost to the city. Twelve years later, a small area of Gladstone Avenue Park was set aside as a playground under the aegis of the local Council of Women. With the support of the local press, a municipally assisted Playgrounds Association was formed and in 1919 was taken over by the city. In that year W.J. Neale was appointed as Ottawa's first Superintendent of Playgrounds and Recreation[10] (Fig. 5.14).

To Toronto must go credit for having Canada's first public school board to recognize the public cost savings in the after hours use of school buildings and grounds.[11] In December, 1902, the Toronto School Board passed a resolution in respect to the use of school property, (Fig. 5.15)

> *. . . that in order that the said property be utilized more fully to the advantage of the ratepayers that the free use of buildings for Parent's League, Art Leagues, Literary Clubs, etc. be granted, all the said entertainments to be under the control of the Board.*[12]

By 1908, the School Board operated five supervised play-

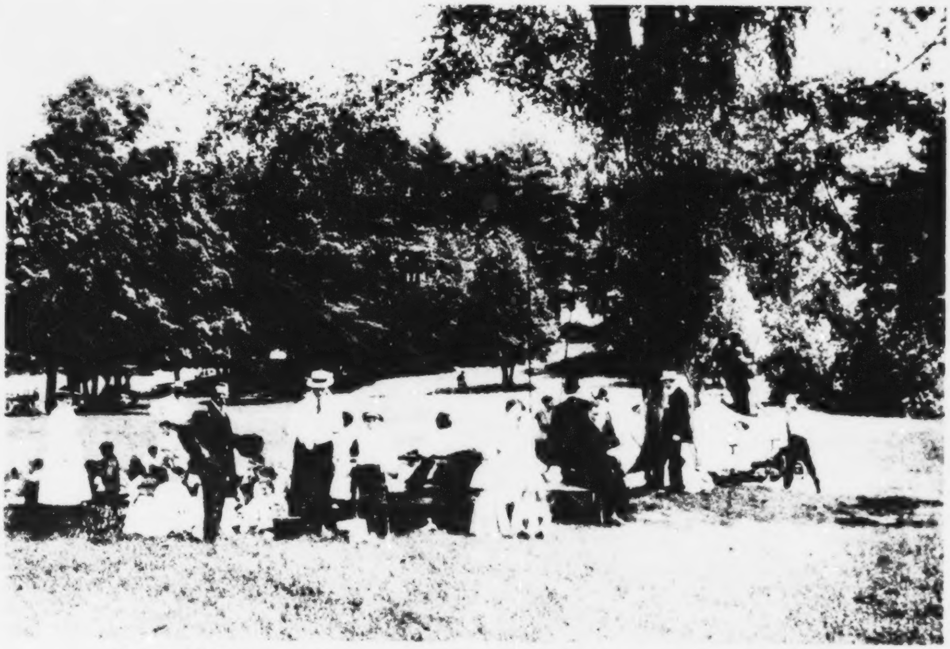

Fig. 5.14 Playground (unsupervised) Rockcliffe Park, Ottawa. c. 1900.

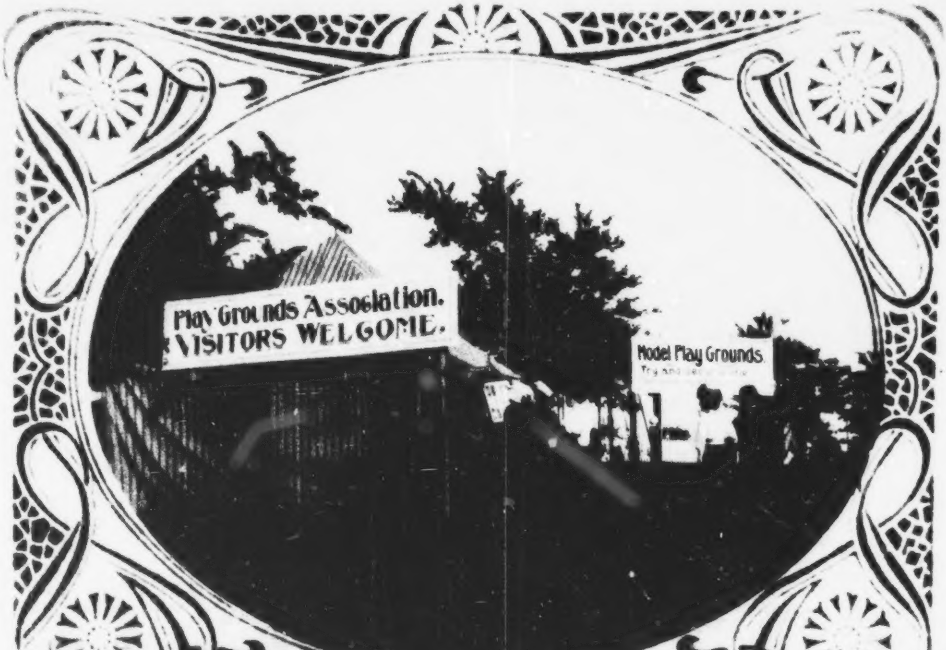
Play Grounds Association.
VISITORS WELCOME.
Model Play Grounds

Fig. 5.15 Playgrounds Association, Toronto: Entrance to Model Playground. c. 1900.
Public Archives Canada/ PA 120557.

grounds and a vacation school on school properties, with two lady teachers assigned to each ground for July and August, with their responsibilities the obligations of "... protecting the children from evil," and "seeing that their language and conduct were proper."[13] In 1912, an agreement was struck between the Playground Association and the City Parks Department, whereby the City assumed responsibility for the operation of the playgrounds, under a newly formed Recreation Branch of the Parks Department and an advisory committee "to give special attention to playgrounds and recreation"[14] (Fig. 5.16).

One of the earliest public acceptances of children's playgrounds occured in 1902 when the Montreal Council of Women pressured the City to broaden the responsibilities of the Park Association as reflected in the name change to the Montreal Park and Playground Association. This new name was incorporated by provincial law in 1904, and the Parks and Playgrounds Association of Montreal was incorporated.[15] The scope of the Association was broad, having been made responsible for

> *Promoting the preservation and extension of the parks and open spaces in and about the City of Montreal, the provision of children's playgrounds, the improvements of the city, the acquisition of land and other property to be used for the benefit of the citizens of Montreal and other parts of the province of Quebec.*[16]

The Hamilton Playground Association was opened in 1909 and was partially supported in the early years by civic funds until 1929 when the Hamilton Playgrounds Commission was established to assume control and management of all city playgrounds. The Hamilton Board of Park Management continued

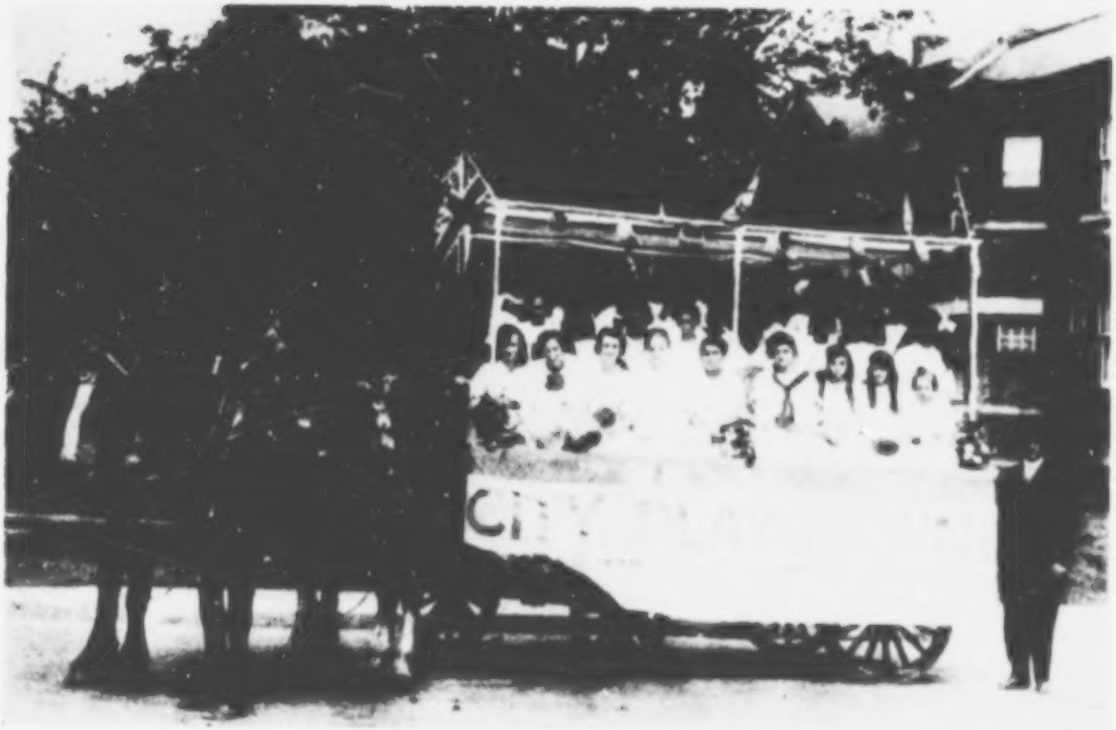

Fig. 5.16 Promoting children's playground, Toronto. c. 1910. Ontario Archvies.

to operate all park lands and facilities quite independently of the Playground Commission.[17]

The playground movement in Ontario, and Canada, had its roots in the United States, where the idea of providing sand for children's play was introduced from Germany. Sandpiles made their first appearance at a mission and nursery in Boston in 1885. By 1900, the Massachussetts State Legislature passed an Act allowing Boston to fund the development of twenty playgrounds. As early as 1887, the City of New York was authorized to spend one million dollars a year to build playgrounds in the congested neighbourhoods of the city. In one case, upwards of $200,000 was spent in developing and equipping one site.[18] This was followed by the establishment of a model playground with sandboxes and accommodation for handball and indoor baseball at the Chicago settlement house founded by the social worker, Jane Addams. In 1907 an observer could remark that "there is no city in the United States which has a woman's club which does not have something to show as a children's playground."[19]

The earliest movement for playgrounds emerged in

Europe. The London Metropolitan Public Gardens Association developed ninety eight playgrounds and gardens between 1882 and 1898.[20] Their counterparts in America were promoted primarily on moral grounds, as a preventative of social disruption, and only secondarily as recreation essential to children's development.[21] The playground was seen as "a bit of land seized from the builders' clutch and set apart for the children, consecrated to their use to help them keep their souls pure though they soil their hands."[22]

The early proponents of playgrounds stressed the importance of these areas being relatively close to every home. There was also a concern about the type and quality of leadership, with the earliest supervisors being teachers who offered a diversity of experiences ranging from story-telling and crafts to organized games. The emphasis on physical activities and competition came with the advent of male leadership, and "the concept of the arts as unmanly grew to plague later attempts to establish broad recreation programmes."[23]

The square and the park were viewed as serving primarily an aesthetic function, "designed to please the eye of busy, hurried men and women - not for idle hours or children's frolic."[24] The literature of the period indicates an overriding concern for beauty, in spite of the apparent acceptance of the need for children's play space in crowded cities (Fig. 5.17). As Robinson states (1907), "until the playground has beauty, the good deed falls short of the perfection it ought to have."[25] The playground was viewed as an entity distinct from the park. As **Harpers Weekly** stated so succinctly in 1897, "A play-ground is a playground, and a park is a park."[26] The park was out of bounds for young people wishing to play games, as is evidenced by this editorial which appeared in a Toronto newspaper in 1898.

The parks are for walking in, not for athletic sports and the

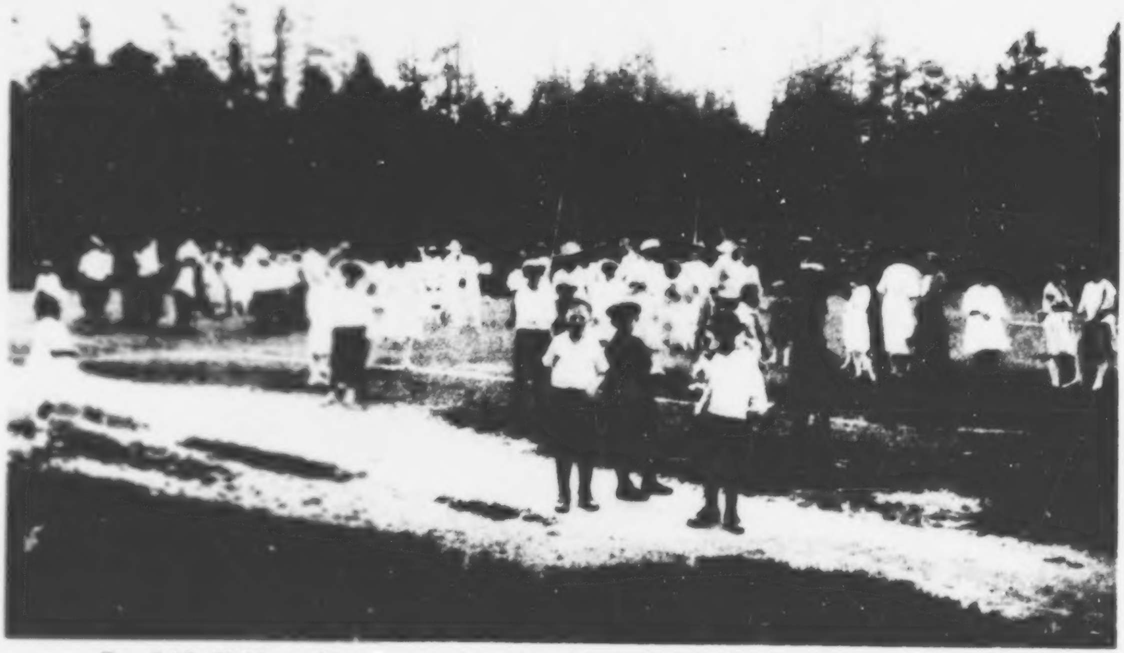

Fig. 5.17 Childrens Playground, Springbank Park, London. c. 1910. Public Archives Canada/ PA 32746.

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streets for traffic, and woe to the boy who is caught desecrating them by playing there. A child of eleven years old appeared in police court charged with the offence of playing ball on Sumach Street. He was fined $2 or ten days in goal. The child was doing nobody any harm and the city has something else to do with its money than pay policemen to run down children, who in their innocence, think it is no sin to try and enjoy themselves.[27]

Meanwhile, another attraction was gaining immense popularity with all ages - the amusement park, which began in the early 1900's peaked in the early 20's, and with a few exceptions, died out by the 1950's when the populace turned to other recreational opportunities.

Amusement Parks

The amusement park was introduced by the street railway companies in many communities in Ontario at the turn of the century, primarily as a weekend income generator. This type of park was fashioned to some degree after the famous seaside resorts of Britain, such as Blackpool, Brighton, or Scarborough, where the major attraction was the restorative quality of the salt-water bathing of these spas. Many English novels of the period were set in these resorts where the characters were caught up in the social whirl of a seaside vacation.

Some of the Ontario amusement parks such as Crystal Beach on Lake Erie are still active today. Scarborough Beach and Hanlans Point on Toronto Island were very popular in the early 1900's but are no longer active (Fig. 5.18 and 5.19). A similar type of amusement park was developed in the early 1900's by the Ontario Hydro about 25 miles north of Toronto at Bond Lake. The park was developed with the traditional rides and, of course, offered boating, swimming and picnic grounds. The Toronto Transportation Commission took over the park in 1927, but within 3 years the operation was closed due to financial losses.

The street railway was the commonly accepted transportation mode for Sunday visitors to the parks, often at the end of the line, such as Rockcliffe Park in Ottawa (see Fig. 5.20), or to attend a Sunday School picnic (Fig. 5.21) in the years preceding the amusement park phenomena.

Britannia Park - Ottawa

In 1819, Captain John LeBreton established Britannia as a small hamlet west of Ottawa. LeBreton, a British officer in the War of 1817, so named the hamlet "as an antidote to the 'American' settlement in Wright's Town" (Hull), Philemon Wright having migrated from Massachussetts. The small settlement grew slowly and by 1914 had become popular as a summer cottage area for Ottawa's well-to-do families before it was enveloped by the city's growth in the post-Second World War days.

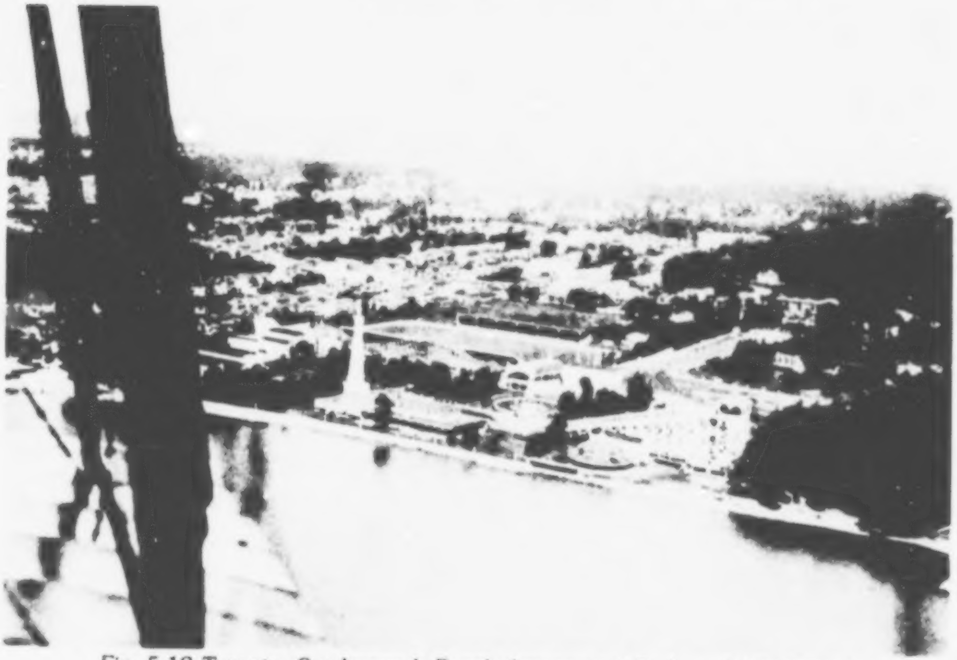

Fig. 5.18 Toronto, Scarborough Beach Amusement Park. c. 1920. Ontario Archives/ S 5998.

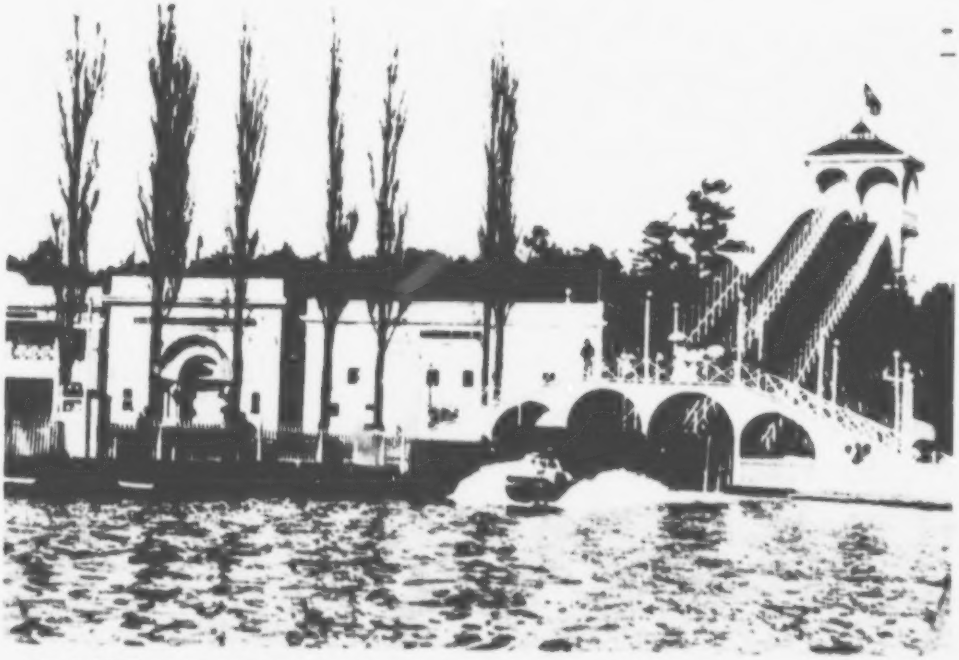

Fig. 5.19 Toronto, Scarborough Beach: The Chutes. c. 1911. Ontario Archives/ S 14799.

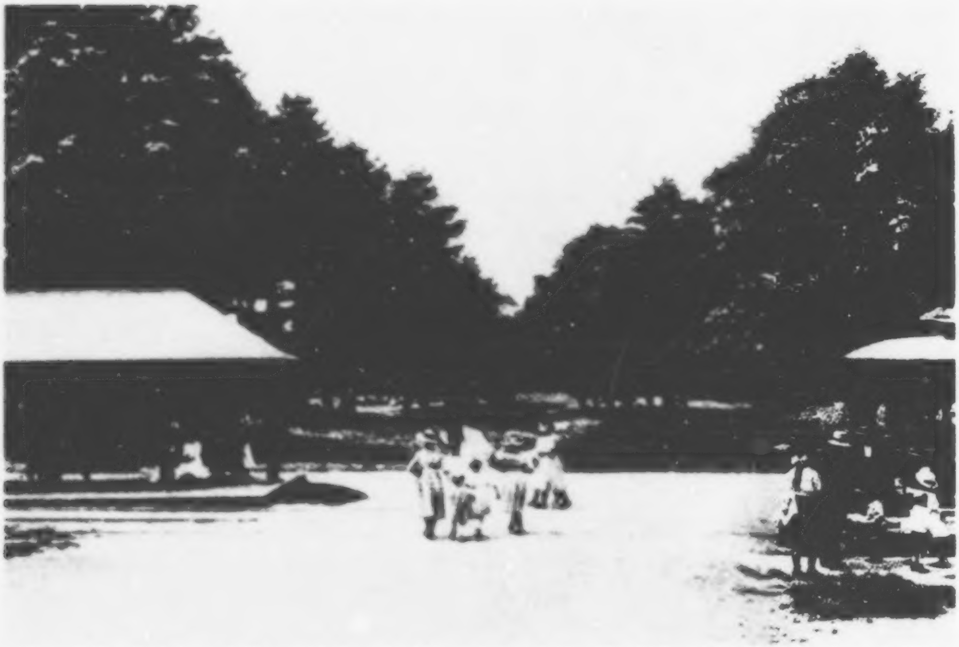

Fig. 5.20 Arriving at the park by electric street-railway: Rockcliffe Park, Ottawa. c. 1898. National Capital Commission.

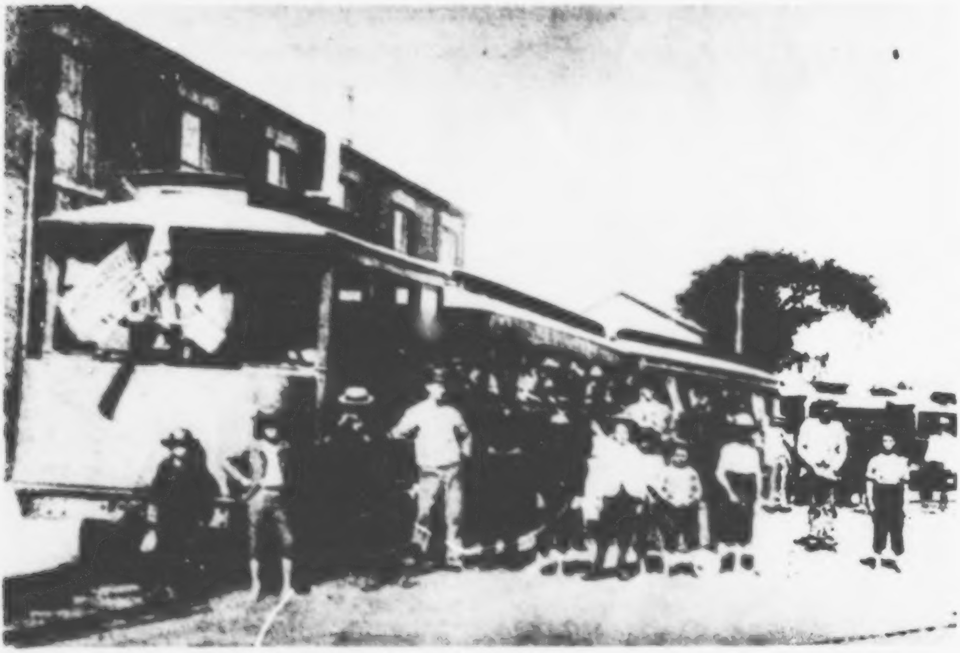

Fig. 5.21 Sunday School Picnic: Hamilton and Dundas Street Railway, 1894. Ontario Archives, S 5673.

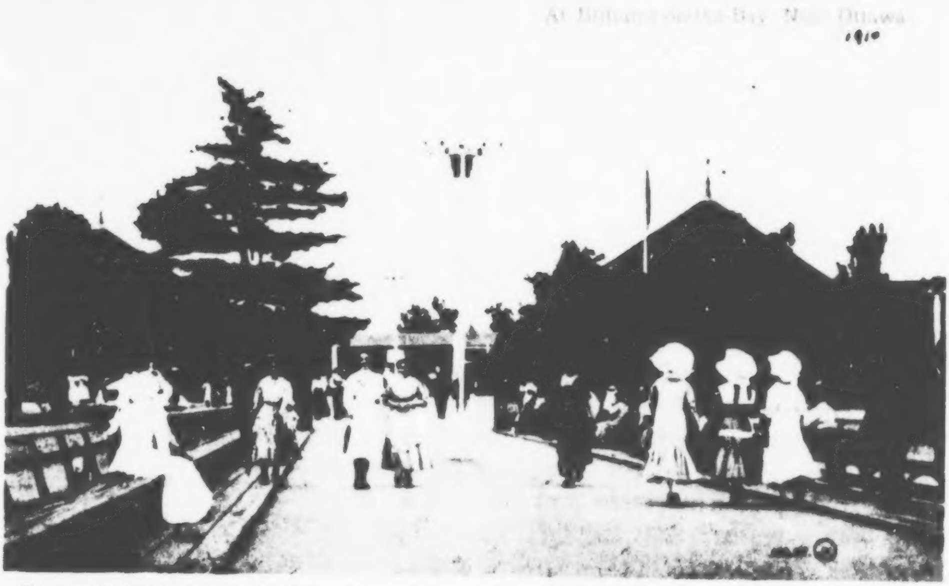
At Brittania-on-the-Bay, Near Ottawa
1910

Fig. 5.22 Brittania-on-the-Bay, Near Ottawa: View along the boardwalk, 1910. Ottawa Civic Archives/ CA 2057.

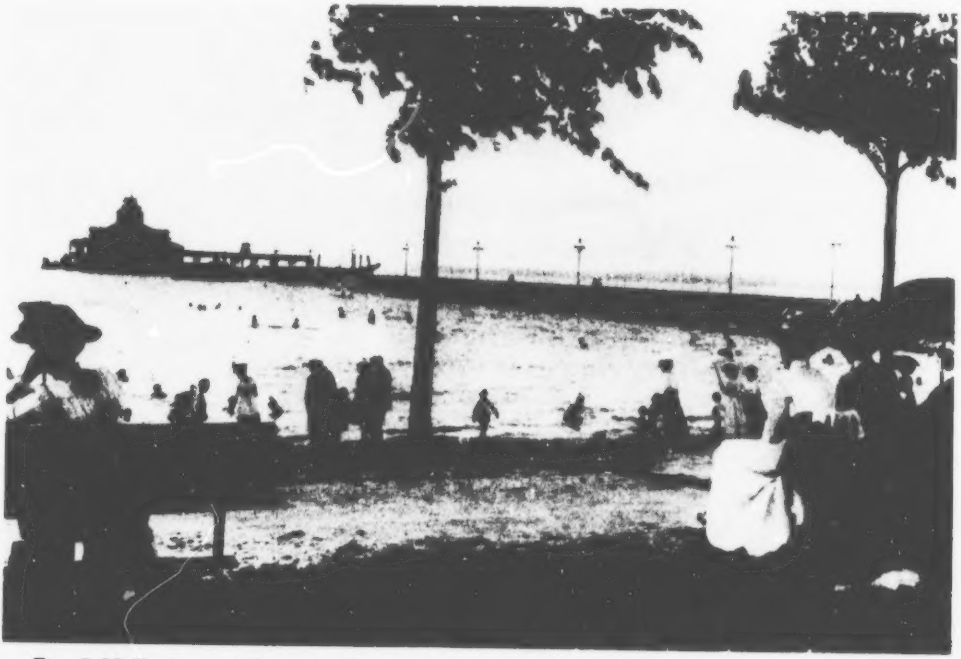

Fig. 5.23 Bathing at Brittania Beach, Ottawa, 1910. Public Archives Canada, C 10842.

Britannia Park became the summer idyll for the citizens of Ottawa shortly after the Ottawa Electric Company opened up the original 18-acre site as picnic and pleasuring grounds in 1900. The park was an instant success from its opening, **The Ottawa Free Press** stating that the park would "undoubtedly within a few years compare favourably with Bar Harbour, Old Orchard Beach, or even the famed Coney Island," three very popular New England summer resorts.[28]

Some of the first developments in 1900 were a 1,000-foot wooden pier, with a breakwater, and some 40 dressing rooms for bathers. Then two buildings were erected, an octagonal food concession and a public washroom. Next came a merry-go-round to offer a diversity of attractions to the patrons of the park. Within five years, an auditorium was added, providing 500 orchestra chairs, and up to 700 chairs for "common" entertainment. In addition, vaudeville shows were introduced along with regular band concerts, and the first moving pictures shown in Ottawa were viewed on a large canvas screen in Britannia Park.[29] The park's success prompted the Railway Company to acquire an additional 35 acres for a picnic area, to build a refreshment pavillion, to clear paths and even to add lights for evening use. When the company reduced the summer fares to the park to the regular one-way nickel fare of the city, further interest was displayed and greater numbers swelled the already popular site (Fig. 5.22) However, the company made it very clear that it wished to avoid the "low class amusements that are found in the great majority of such resorts" (Fig. 5.23). The Britannia Boating Club, with membership soaring, persuaded the Company to extend the pier an additional 300 feet and to build a new boathouse and ballroom at the end of the pier. In 1907, the pier was extended by 150 feet (Fig. 5.24). From the pier, one could board the excursion steamer G.B.

Greene and enjoy an evening cruise, complete with dancing and refreshments, to Aylmer and Fitzroy Harbour, further up the Ottawa River.

The Hull Electric Tramway Company, directly across the Ottawa River from Britannia Park, looked with envy upon the experience of the Ottawa Electric Railway Company, and in 1901 established a counter-part amusement park two miles

Fig. 5.24 Brittania Park pier after 1907 extension, and before the 1918 fire destroyed the pier. c. 1914. Ottawa Civic Archives/ CA 2633.

west of Aylmer, at the western terminal of the tram line. Called Queen's Park, it offered swimming, boating, pavillions and a pier, along with other recreational opportunities. However, by 1920, the Aylmer park folded, and the property was sold for cottage development.[31]

Unfortunately, Britannia Park fell into a period of decline during World War I, and never returned to the glorious days of the former decades. The G.B. Greene was scrapped in 1917 because it had been damaged by fire at the Quyon Quebec pier in the previous year. Tragedy struck again the following year when the boathouse at the end of the pier went up in flames, and the majority of members joined other nearby sailing clubs. The increasing use of the automobile, urban growth, and alternative recreational opportunities, coupled with the economic stagnation of the depression period, made attendance at the Park decline steadily, the major attractions being reduced to group picnic grounds and Sunday afternoon band concerts. During World War II, however, the beach area and the Lakeside Pavillion's popularity reached their peaks, with the Electric Railway Company taking full advantage of the gasoline shortage. But by the 1950's the park's attendance had sharply declined, the buildings and facilities were poorly maintained, and weeds overtook the swimming area.

By 1950, the park, at least in its appearance, had not changed significantly. The pier, with the two bathing houses and diving tower, was now 50 years old. Dancing was still reasonably popular at the Lakeside Gardens pavillion, but the annual growth of aquatic weeds had become a major nuisance for swimmers. Mayor Charlotte Whitton argued very forcibly to develop the site for housing which, in turn, would provide increased income to the Transportation Commission. However, the City Council favoured the idea of a public park, and the city acquired the 60 acre property in 1950, when the commercialized amusement park was in dire financial straits. At this period, most civic transit authorities in Ontario had relinquished ownership of similar amusement parks because of financial concerns.[32]

The City of Ottawa Recreation Department began to make a series of changes and improvements to the park in an attempt to restore the site to its former status because it was the largest park in the City and the only major park site in the western sector of the City. A master plan was developed in 1952, with costs estimated at five hundred thousand dollars, to be expended over several years. Plans included a new dance hall, additional ornamental gardens and benches, the removal of the north end of the pier, widening of the remaining section of the pier to allow for two artificial swimming pools, a large terrace and boardwalk. In addition, there were to be new tennis courts, bowling greens, picnic facilities and amusement "devices," as well as a zoo, a camping site and, to complete the picture, a stock car racing track, primarily to attract revenue. It was probably easier to list the activities and facilities not to be offered on this relatively small site, as it became apparent that there was something for everybody, a "pot-pourri," far removed from the Olmstedian concept of an urban park as a rural retreat.

Fortunately, the execution of the master plan was not undertaken but, since little was done to maintain the existing facilities, within four years of its acquisition, the Recreation Committee recommended that the park be closed until necessary repairs were undertaken. Board of Control took over the park, and finally began to make essential improvements. However, disaster struck on the night of July 4, 1955 and fire destroyed Lakeside Gardens. Mayor Whitton, with Council support, sought new plans in hopes of returning the park to its "former glories."[33] The new plan called for the acquisition of an additional 60 acres, but this purchase was never completed. However, the old wooden pier was removed, the 1,000 foot concrete pier was widened, the newly constructed Lakeside Gardens were opened in 1958, and the general appearance of the park was upgraded.

This renewed interest in the park was short-lived and by the mid 1960's "most of the more ambitious improvements planned for the park were abandoned as interest subsided."[34] Numerous ideas were expounded, but were not realized over the next decade. A threat arose in the mid-1970's as the transportation section of the region's official plan called for a major arterial through the park to link with a new bridge connecting Aylmer to Ottawa's west end. A public Save-the-Park committee rose to the occasion, and staved off the completion of such plans, at least for a few years. The once famous park had by now deteriorated to a "garbage-strewn, pot-hole ridden" neglected public space.[35] Once again the newly-elected Mayor, this time Pierre Benoit, called for a rejuvenation of Britannia Park and certain improvements were undertaken, including the construction of a new vehicular access route.

Today the park still serves an important public recreation function, despite its roller-coaster history. Family picnics, tennis, sunbathing, and swimming are still popular in the summer months, except in certain periods when swimming is prohibited due to bacterial pollution, while cross-country ski-trails are popular during the winter months. This site's potential as a functional and popular public park is highly evident.

It would appear that the major lesson to be learned from the 80 years experience of Britannia Park is that it suffered from "the absence of any real long-term commitment" to the concept of a well-maintained, well-managed public park which could meet changing public recreation wants and preferences.[36] This experience lends credibility to the argument for specific site planning undertaken by professionally trained designers (landscape architects) and based on publically-derived and accepted goals and objectives. Such a large open public recreation space, adequately designed, could meet the criterion of flexibility in satisfying changing public values.

Frederick G. Todd (1876-1948)

Frederick G. Todd, recognized as Canada's first resident landscape architect, undertook projects from St. John's Newfoundland to Vancouver, B.C. in the forty-eight years between 1900 and his death in 1948 at age 72 (Fig. 5.25). Todd was born on March 11, 1876 at Concord, New Hampshire, in the United States, studied agriculture at Amherst, Massachussetts, and then apprenticed as a landscape architect in Brookline, Massachussetts with the firm of Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot. On the completion of his apprenticeship in 1900, Todd moved to Montreal and set up his practice, very quickly establishing a solid reputation as a competent designer, author, and articulate spokesman for landscape planning and design, but his humility and modesty left a legacy that has only recently been recognized. We now are fully cognizant of Todd's outstanding contributions in the fields ranging from garden design, neighbourhood and urban planning, to public work projects.[37]

Todd's initial contact with Canada came about as a result of Frederick Law Olmsted's plans for Mount Royal in Montreal. Todd became involved in supervision of certain aspects of the landscape construction before his move to Montreal because the plans emanated from Olmsted's Brookline office. Indeed, one of Todd's first professional proposals on his move to Montreal in 1900 was for a look-out on Mount Royal.[38] Other of Todd's major projects included the Battlefields National Park on the Plains of Abraham in Quebec City, the siting of the new Saskatchewan provincial parliament buildings in Regina, Shaughnessy Heights and Point Grey in Vancouver, and in later years St. Helen's Island in Montreal, as a few examples of his verY successful practice in all parts of Canada. His plans for Assiniboine Park in Winnipeg (1904-1906) reflect the Olmstedian concept of park planning, including a recognition and extension of the existing landscape character, peripheral driveways and internal circulatory pedestrian systems, natural bodies of water, and a range of clearly-defined use areas offering a diversity of recreational opportunities. One can perceive design details inherent in Mount Royal and Central Park, all examples of the English landscape style developed in the late 18th and 19th centuries in Britain. As a further indication of Olmsted's reputation and credibility in the period, a moderate-sized park laid out by Olmsted's sons in the Tuxedo Park subdivision in Winnipeg was originally named Olmsted Park, as shown in Fig. 5.34. Unfortunately the name of the park was soon changed to Hubek Park, the name of the developer.

Todd was actively engaged in the advising and planning of a number of municipalities in Ontario in the early 1900's. He laid out the original plan for Speed Park (known to-day as Riverside Park) in the former town of Preston, now part of Cambridge. The original plan for the park was typical of Olmsted's approach to park design, as mentioned above in the layout of Assiniboine Park in Winnipeg.

In 1905 Todd designed four city parks in Galt: Victoria Park, Jackson Park (known to-day as Soper Park), Dickson Park and High Park (now called Centennial Park). Todd's sensitivity to landscape design is clearly demonstrated in a description to the Chairman of the Galt Parks Board on July 14, 1905,

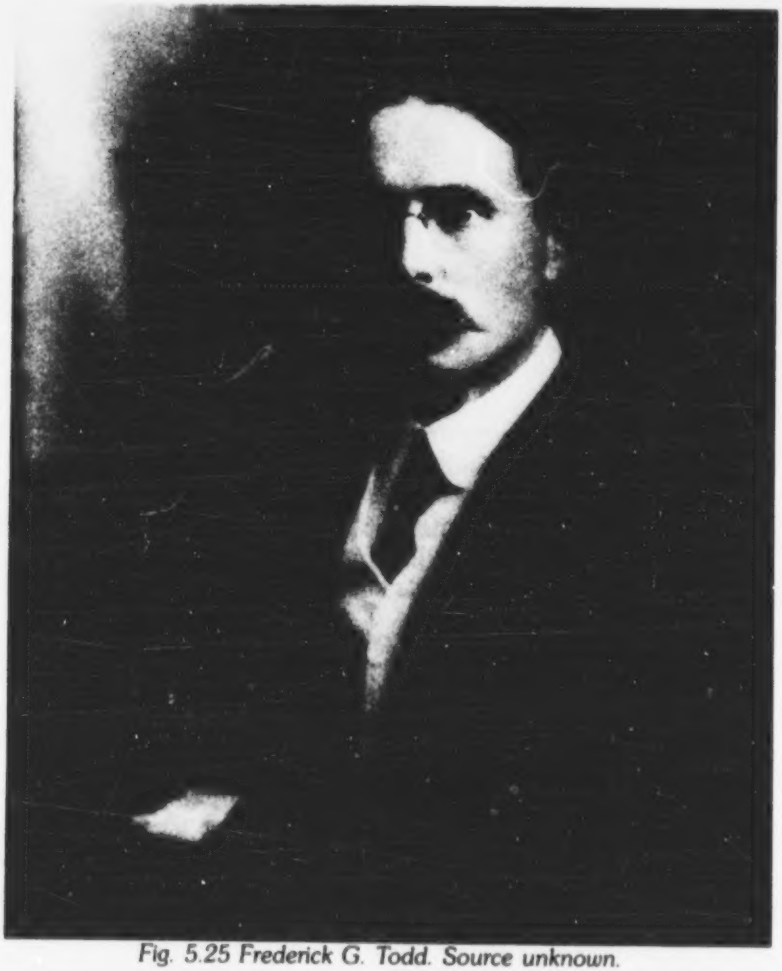

Fig. 5.25 Frederick G. Todd. Source unknown.

explaining the **General Plan for Jackson Park**, as shown in Appendix C. The **Agreement** between Todd and the Galt Board of Park Management affecting the landscape plans for Jackson Park and High Park is shown in Appendix D.

An insight into the services provided by Todd is shown in a "*Circular As To Professional Methods and Charges*" supplied by Todd in 1904, shown in Appendix E, along with a listing that accompanied this circular indicating the clients he had served in his first four years (1900-1904) of practice in Canada.

In 1906, the Kingston Parks Board invited Todd to visit the city and to consider the best means to beautify Kingston. Todd filed a report with the Board, but unfortunately no copy remains, nor do the Board minutes record the reaction to his suggestions.

A more detailed outline of Todd's contribution to early public park development is provided in the next section within the context of a study carried out for the Ottawa Improvement Commission in 1903, and his contributions to parks development in Stratford a few years later are then discussed.

Ottawa Improvement Commission

The Ottawa Improvement Commission was created by an Act of Parliament in 1899, under Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier, and provided for a four-man Board of Commissioners (later expanded to eight persons), three to be appointed by the Governor General in Council and the fourth by the City of Ottawa. Under the Act, the Commission was given responsibility for: purchasing, acquiring and holding real property in the City of Ottawa.

Under the Act, the new Commission was empowered to:[39]

> *Purchase, acquire and hold real property in the City of Ottawa or in the vicinity thereof for the purpose of public parks or squares, streets, avenues, drives or thoroughfares;*
>
> *Perform and execute all necessary or proper acts or things for the purpose of preparing, building, improving, repairing, and maintaining all or any of such works for public use;*
>
> *Co-operate with the Corporation or with the Board of Park Management of the City of Ottawa in the improvement and beautifying of said city or vicinity thereof, by the maintenance and improvement of public parks, squares, streets, avenues, drives or thoroughfares, and the erection of public buildings in said City or in the vicinity thereof;*
>
> *The Commission was granted a budget of*

> *$60,000 a year for twenty years from 1899 to 1919, and the Commission could borrow up to $250,000 for public works.*

At the time of the Commission's inception, the City of Ottawa was responsible for a number of parks, but, with civic approval, the Commission slowly assumed responsibility for the largest parks in the city, as well as for federal government grounds. By 1904, it managed over 215 acres, comprising the following park sites: Rockcliffe, Rideau, Strathcona, Somerset, Major's Hill, as well as Cartier Square, Nepean Point, Government Grounds and the Canal Reserve (Fig. 5.26). The City of Ottawa maintained a number of small park sites totalling about thirty-one acres.

The Commission concentrated its first efforts on the development of Rockcliffe Park and the Rideau Canal Driveway and the causeway across Dow's Lake but, while the Commissioners appeared to have a strong sense of direction, their ideas were never committed to a written plan (Fig. 5.27). As a result of the recognition of the need for such a plan Frederick Todd was invited to Ottawa and was commissioned to draw up a report to provide a policy and direction for the future development of the city.

The report for the **Improvement and Beautifying of Ottawa** was undertaken to consider "the adaptability of certain portions of it (Ottawa) for park purposes, and also with the idea of outlining a general comprehensive scheme for the systematic improvement of the city."[40] Todd's vision is reflected in the opening paragraph of the report in which he asks:

> *Is it reasonable to look so far ahead as one hundred years or more and to make plans for generations in the distant future?*[41]

Todd goes on to answer his own question:

> *We have only to study the history of older cities, and note at what enormous cost they have overcome the lack of provision for their growth, to realize the future prosperity and beauty of the city depends in a great measure to look ahead, and the power to grasp the needs and requirements of the great population it is destined to have.*[42]

Todd presented a general outline or scheme for a park system, and emphasized that a much more specific and detailed plan should be developed based on the concept he had outlined. He suggested that a park system should be considered according to the following scheme:[43]

Large Natural Parks or Reserves

- two or three large reserves representative of the Canadian forest, containing several thousand acres, within close driving proximity to the Capital; Scenic preservation was basic, but bridle paths and drives were to be included (even if not needed for years to come).

Suburban Parks

- medium-sized parks, some little distance from the centre of the city, with convenient access to the great majority of the people, especially those not fortunate enough to get away from the city during the hot days of summer.

Boulevards and Parkways

- "boulevard" meant an avenue adapted for pleasure driving, usually planted on each side and often down the center with rows of shade trees, while a "parkway" was defined as a winding pleasure drive treated in a park-like manner; the boulevards and parkways were intended as connectors of principal parks.

Waterway Parks - Bathing

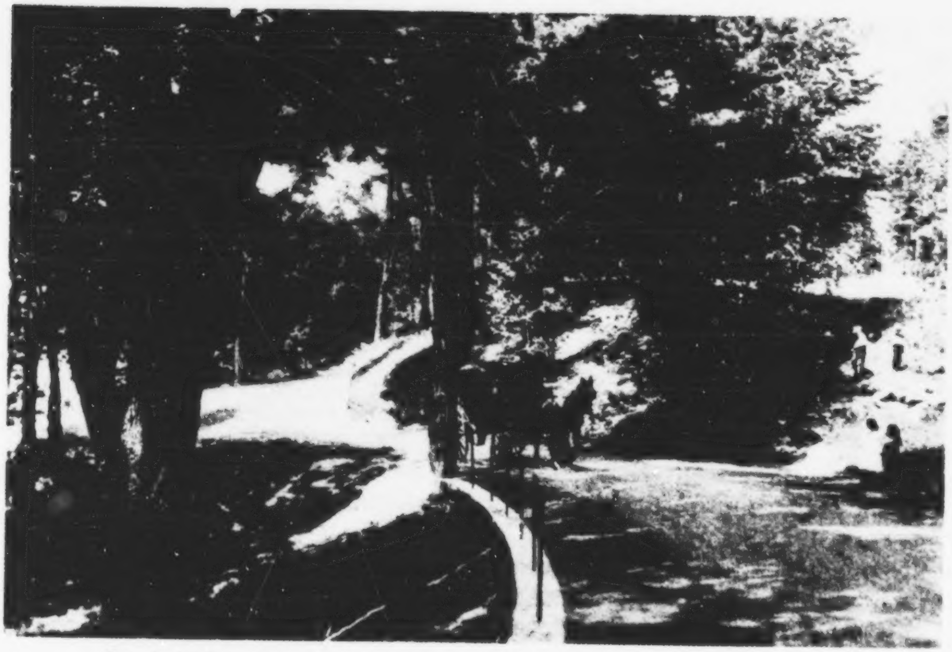

Fig. 5.26 Rockcliffe Park, Ottawa. c. 1900. National Capital Commission.

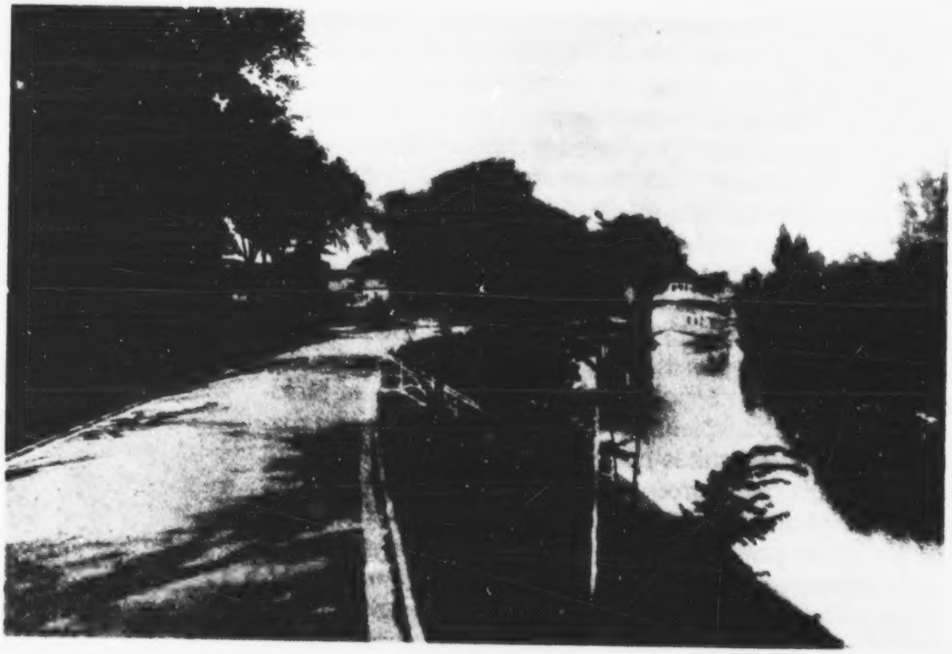

Fig. 5.27 Rideau Canal Driveway, west of Bank Street, Ottawa. c. 1908. National Capital Commission.

- provision was intended for bathing along the waterway parks and parkways, for the enjoyment of the public.

City Parks and Squares

- small squares and breathing places at various intervals throughout the crowded parts of the city to provide a place of rest and recreation in each neighbourhood.

Todd's report sheds much light on his personal views and his philosophy of landscape design, and clearly demonstrates his amazing grasp of urban planning as well. His innovative ideas were ignored for some years but eventually were included in later development plans for the Capital.[44] Todd first conceived the values of and means to establish Sussex Drive as a prestigous ceremonial route, now identified as The Mile of History. That Todd placed much importance on the preservation of the indigenous landscape is indicated by his observation that "real landscape art is nothing if it is not conservative of natural beauty, and does not consist alone in building rustic bridges, or in arranging plants or trees, but is rather the fitting of landscape for human use and enjoyment in such a manner as will be most appropriate and beautiful."[45] He added that "we do not consider whether the plans for the development of the parks, are appropriate or not, but allow all sorts of monstrosities of buildings, of grading, and of planting to creep into our parks and then wonder why the result is not pleasing".[46] While it was not an original concept, Todd promoted the idea of linear parkways and rural reservations, primarily to meet the future needs of a much larger urban population.

Todd's report was presumably too grandiose and enlightened for the stolid and conservative members of the Ottawa Improvement Commission. Although they were prepared in August 1903, the members took no steps to implement the recommendations for almost ten years. Development from

1907 to 1912 occured under the direct supervision of Mr. Alex Stuart, who introduced his own design solutions, based on his practical experience in public works. In addition to working on the Driveway, he laid out and developed Strathcona, Somerset, King Edward, Central and Nepean Point Parks, as well as Lady Grey Road, but there was little in Mr. Stuart's developments that indicated even a basic understanding of the rudiments of landscape architecture. The Commissioners came under a barrage of criticism for the type of landscape development undertaken on the Driveway and other park properties under their jurisdiction. Making accusations about the employment of crude and inartistic design, referred to as the gardenesque style, a number of highly respected professional individuals and groups levelled their charges at the Commission (Fig. 5.28 and Fig. 5.29). These groups included prominent personages such as Thomas Mawson and Dunnington-Grubb, both landscape architects, as well as the Ontario Association of Architects and the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. In sheer frustration Mr. C.P. Meredith, a new member of the Commission, in a letter written to the Minister of Agriculture in 1912, stated that the Commission had "carried out its work in a most unbusinesslike way, and persists to continue doing so notwithstanding all the criticisms that have been made, and are content to have the general park scheme, the engineering work, and the designing of the structures requiring artistic training done by a so-called superintendent, who is nothing more than a bricklayer."[47]

This same bricklayer (Alex Stuart) came under fire on a number of occasions, one provocation being the construction of the Lady Grey Driveway along the face of Nepean Point in direct contradiction to the route suggested in Todd's report. Built against the magnificent lime-stone cliff overlooking Parliament Hill, the new driveway was hidden behind a concrete wall and a fake rubble face. This work led to the most severe criticism by architects and engineers, as it was being carried out without the advice of an engineer or landscape architect, and was "in the hands of a bricklayer, as is all the construction and so-called artistic work of the Commission. In short, this driveway, as being carried out, is a fearful blunder."[48]

The Commissioners were perceived to be the guilty parties behind such inappropriate development schemes, and it was observed that the 1903 Todd report "was too big apparently for the Commission to grasp, and it was consequently pigeonholed."[49] As a further indictment of the Commission, its reaction to Todd's recommendations is most revealing. It considered the idea of forest reserves (i.e. Gatineau Park) as being "ridiculous," and took no action. The Commission continued to post "keep off the grass" signs in city parks and squares despite Todd's warning that these spaces could easily become places "for the display of the gardener's art and his ability to design curious and fantastically shaped flower beds," considered highly inappropriate by the sensitive Todd.[50] His most severe criticism was heaped on the layout for Strathcona Park (Fig. 5.30). "This park was carried out without any careful study and with the result that it was expensive to construct, is expensive to maintain, is meaningless and unsatisfactory in layout and is vulgar in detail."[51] Somerset Park was "laid out in a meaningless manner and among other alleged ornaments are artificial flower beds made of concrete and coloured stones."[52]

As proof of Todd's vision and innovative thinking, Mr. Robert McLeary, former Assistant-General Manager of the National Capital Commission in Ottawa, states:

> *The breadth of Todd's concerns, the wisdom of his proposals, and the clarity of his foresight, are exemplified by the fact that many of his proposals*

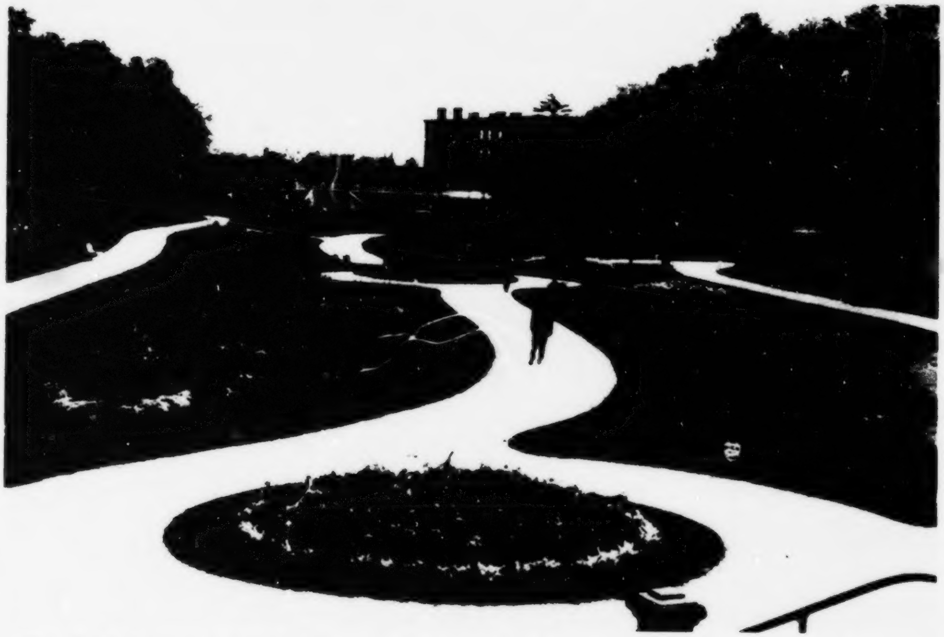

Fig. 5.28 Ottawa: Central Park - gardenesque landscape style. c. 1903. Ottawa Historic Society.

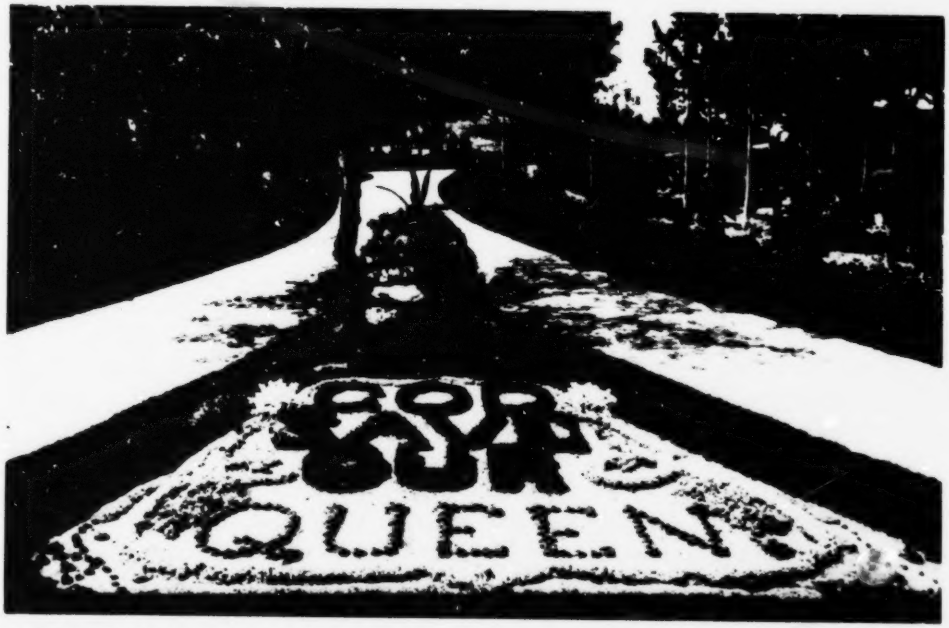

Fig. 5.29 "God Save Our Queen", flower bed on Parliament Hill, Ottawa. c. 1900. Public Archives Canada/ PA 12654.

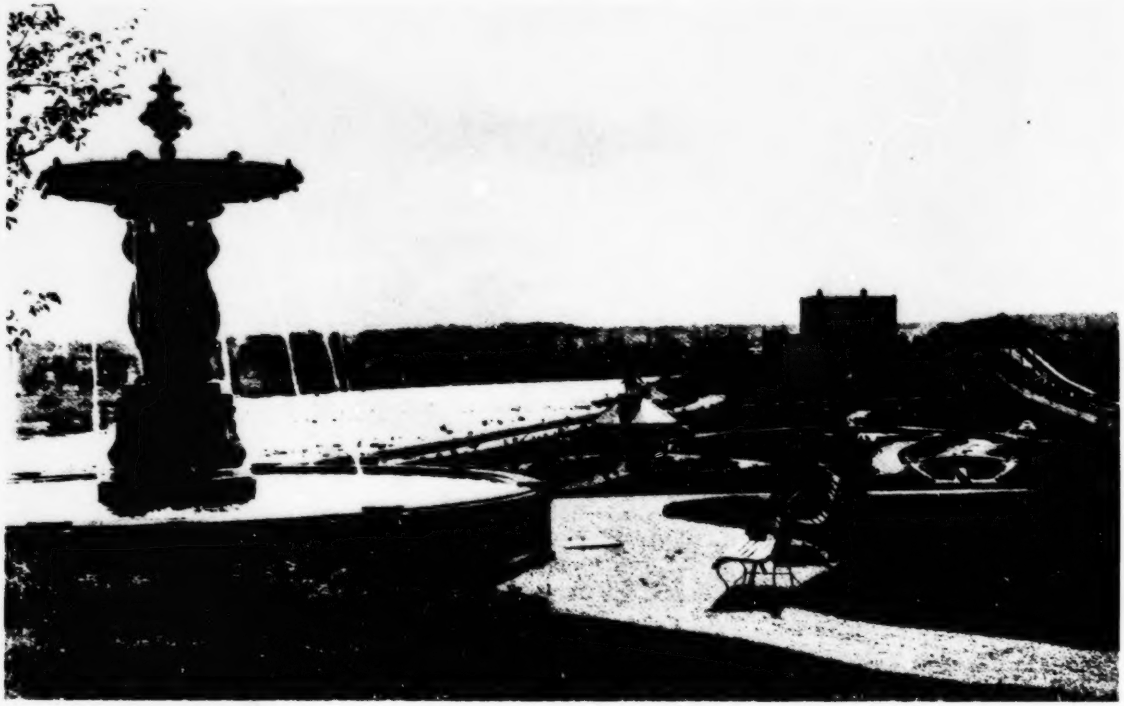

Fig. 5.30 Strathcona Park, Ottawa, looking south. c. 1904. National Capital Commission.

> *now form an accepted part of the fabric of Ottawa and the area. Such things as the driveway system; the concept of Gatineau Park; the importance of the waterways; the symbolism of Parliament Hill, all received detailed and comprehensive attention by Mr. Todd.*[53]

Todd's reputation was established quickly and his contribution to the early development of the park system of Stratford follows.

Stratford

Stratford was founded as a mill site by William (Tiger) Dunlop on behalf of the Canada Company in 1838. First known as Little Thames, the river was renamed the Avon by the Canada Company, and in 1835 Dunlop named the newly-founded village Stratford, probably on instructions from England. The first permanent building was a hotel, later known as the Shakespeare Inn. Progress was slow, and in 1852 Stratford was still a hamlet in the centre of a swamp, but one year later it became the county seat of Perth County. The arrival of the first railway line in 1855 stimulated growth, and by

1870, with a population of about 5000 persons, and with the benefits of two more railway lines, the town prospered and by 1885 achieved city status. Parkland was first acquired in that same year and a Parks Commission was established, comprised of members of City Council. However, there was little progress in parkland acquisition and development after the initial land purchase in 1885. Constant conflict between the Council and the Commission resulted in the abolishing of the Commission and in the formation of a Park Board in March, 1904, under the **Public Parks Act of Ontario**. The new administrative body was formed to safeguard the existing 50 acres of parkland, comprised of the Old Grove (now known as Avondale Park), Queen's Park at the opposite end of the city, and a small triangular piece of land known as Battery Park.

The newly-founded Board, under the chairmanship of Mr. Thomas Orr, made a decision in its first year of operation (1904) that was to have far-reaching implications. The Board approached two landscape architects with a proposal to undertake the making of plans to acquire and develop parklands, particularly along the Avon River. Mr. F. von Hoffman of New York City and Frederick G. Todd of Montreal were selected by the Board to submit proposals. Todd was chosen as the town's landscape architect and subsequently prepared the original scheme for the layout of the present park areas of the city, and particularly for the river frontage.[54] He submitted a report in October, 1904, that was viewed by many to be overly ambitious and much beyond Stratford's needs (Todd's professional fee schedule is shown in Appendix D). However, the Board accepted the report with a decision to carry out a portion of the plan over a period of several years in order to acheive their objective. The first step was to acquire the lands that would form a linkage along the southern portion of the Avon River between

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Avondale and Queen's Park. This was not an easy task. The shoreline was owned, for at least one half of its length, by a syndicate that operated a generating station on the river and which also sold water and ice to the residents of the city. The remainder of the land was still under the ownership of the Canada Company based in England, and the marshy shoreline was indefinite and lined with old frame warehouses, outhouses, garbage dumps, rubbish, and stables. At this point the cost of acquiring these properties for parkland appeared prohibitive.

The newly-formed Board was severely tested within a year of its formation. The Canadian Pacific Railway planned to construct a railway line through Stratford, and viewed the lands adjacent to the Avon River as a natural route for the line but these were the same lands that the Board sought to acquire for parkland purposes. The Board countered the C.P.R. proposal by recommending to City Council that a seventy foot strip of land on the north shore be designated as the railway access, provided the railway construction be undertaken within two years. The C.P.R. reacted strongly and rejected this recommendation, insisting that the south shore was much superior for their purposes.[55] The Board, at this point, sought the advice of Frederick Todd, the Montreal consultant who had provided the Board with the plans for the river-valley park system. Todd responded to the possibility of the rail line by stating:

> *Stratford can have at comparatively small expense, a Park which if treated in an artistic manner may be made extremely choice and beautiful. . . . Then it would seem to be the height of unwisdom to defeat the objects for which the park has been purchased by locating a railway along its edge. For I have not the slightest hesitancy in saying that to build the rail-*

> *way along the north shore of the lake, - would be to almost ruin the proposed park.*[56]

Armed with Todd's professional opinion, and their deep concern to preserve the natural attributes of the river valley, the Board, led by Thomas Orr, began the fight to save the parkland (Fig. 5.31). This was an uphill battle because the railway proposal appealed to many citizens, particularly to the members of the business community who welcomed the prospects for economic growth offered by the new line. In addition, there was a general public apathy towards the issue. However, after almost a decade of bitter controversy, in which many citizens expressed feelings that the Parks Board was acting arbitrarily and doing the city great injustice, the issue was brought to a vote of the ratepayers on March 10, 1913. The vote was close, with 936 persons favouring the C.P.R. and 1062 persons opposed - but the Parks Board had won, and the land bordering the river was saved for park purposes.[57]

The lands were acquired in piece-meal fashion by annexation, through purchases and through donations to the city but the major objective of the Todd Report, that the Board secure all the land, was fulfilled by 1911.[58] In more recent post World War II years, the Upper Thames Conservation Authority has dredged the river, widened and straightened its channel, and built the Thomas Orr dam for flood control purposes. The far-sighted actions of the early Park Board have resulted in as fine a comprehensive parks system as will be found in a comparable sized city in Ontario, or indeed in Canada.

The Shakespearean Festival, established in the early 1950's, found an ideal setting in which function and aesthetics have been combined to transform Stratford "from a sleepy, rustic city into a sophisticated summer resort of international repute and unique character" (Fig. 5.32).[59]

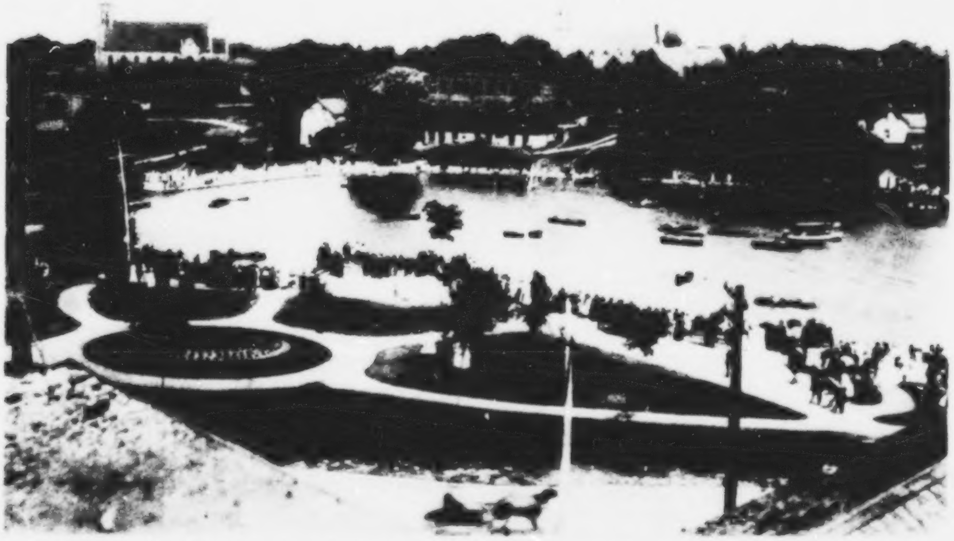

Fig. 5.31 Lake Victoria, Stratford, showing site of proposed railway line in foreground c 1913. The Beacon Herald, Stratford

Fig. 5.32 Stratford Festival Theatre in park setting, Stratford, 1969.

The Spread Westward

The rapidly growing cities in the western provinces of Canada viewed the need for public parklands in much the same lights as the older more established towns and cities in the eastern and central provinces. The city of Vancouver, established in 1886 from the original town of Granville, with a population of about 10,000 persons, lost no time in forming a civic parks committee in 1888 despite the prevelant attitude that public parks and green spaces were an unnecessary extravagance in a newly-emerging urban centre preoccupied with commerce and growth. Indeed, the original survey of Granville in 1870 contained no provision for a village green or park.[60] A.W. Ross, a prominent local real estate broker showed much initiative and foresight, however, in writing City Council and suggesting the acquisition of the forested property under the control of the Department of Defence. By 1887, the 1000-acre parcel of land was leased to the city on condition that the "peninsula's natural integrity should be disturbed as little as possible," and it was to be held on a 99 year lease for one dollar a year.[61] Lord Stanley, Governor General of Canada, who opened the park on September 27, 1889, was honoured by having the park named Stanley Park.

The Province of Manitoba passed the **Manitoba Parks Act** in 1892, modelled after the Ontario Act passed only nine years earlier. The City of Winnipeg lost no time in setting up a Parks Board and by 1893 formulated a policy to acquire and emphasize "small urban parks, ornamental squares or breathing spaces throughout the City, and also a large suburban park or outside park, as means of enjoyment and recreation."[62] This means a most innovative step in that it recognized the need for a number of inner city parks as well as for a traditional, large, suburban or "city" park. As a result of this policy, in 1894 the Board purchased eight small sites totalling 33.7 acres. Another ten years passed before the "outside" parkland was provided in the acquisition of the 282-acre Assiniboine Park for $39,903. By 1909, over 500 acres of parkland had been purchased at the cost of $300,000.00 (Fig. 5.33).

Frederick Todd of Montreal served as the landscape architectural consultant in the site plans for Assiniboine Park in 1904, but the records indicate that the development was modified to some degree from the original plans, which were based on Olmsted's landscape design principles as briefly described earlier in this chapter.

Edmonton, with a population of about 14,000 persons, was chosen as the capital of the new province of Alberta in 1905. Little public concern was expressed for the need of parks and open space until the economic boom and accompanying growth in the 1909-1911 period. By 1912, there was a growing pressure for public recreation space, and the desirability of a 15 mile drive along the North Saskatchewan River valley was recognized. This concern led to the appointment of the Assistant City Engineer, P.A. Von Auberg as Superintendent of Parks. Soon 800 acres of land were set aside as public parkland. The parks were very popular, with up to 6,000 persons enjoying East End (Borden) Park on a Sunday, the major attraction being the band concerts. The steam-boat City of Edmonton attracted large crowds to the picnic grounds at Laurier Park. In 1912, City Council engaged the consulting firm of landscape architects Morell and Nichols from Minneapolis to provide site plans at a cost of $3,273.00 for the key city parks (Fig. 5.34). However, only a few of the sites were developed with most of the projects remaining on paper.[63] The year 1913 brought on a severe recession, and the Parks Department reverted back to the Engineers Department, which retained administrative control of the various park operations until 1947 when the Parks

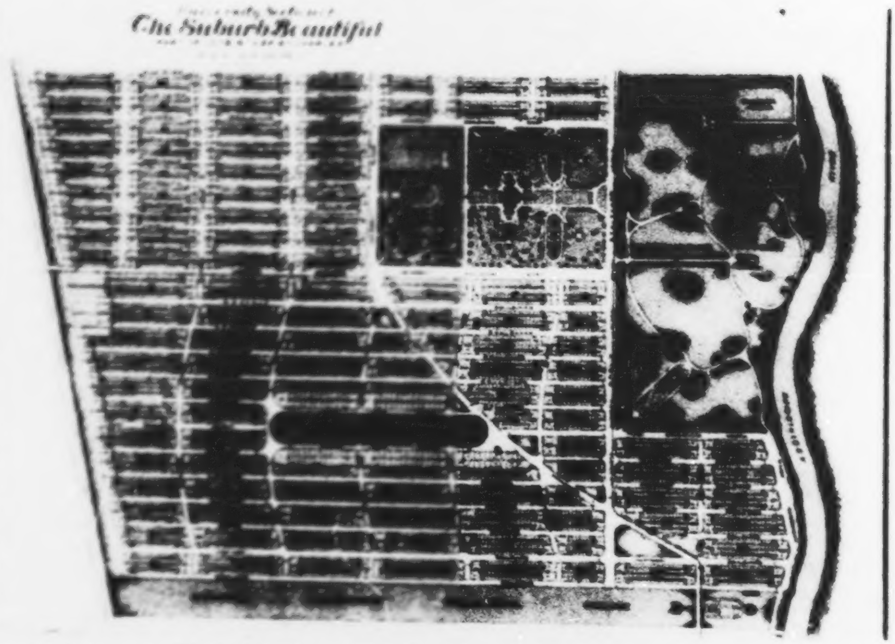

Fig. 5.33 Tuxedo Park, Winnipeg, Neighbourhood showing Assiniboine and Olmsted Parks. c. 1910. Public Archives Canada.

Department was re-established after the lapse of thirty-four years.[64]

The other major cities in the western provinces have a similar history of early park development, with Calgary establishing a park board in 1910 (but three years later the department functions reverted to City Council). Saskatoon established a parks board in 1912 under the terms of the **Saskatoon Public Parks Act** of the provincial legislature, along with a "Park Fund Rate" of one-half mill.[65]

Summary

By the advent of the First World War, the urban park was viewed as a necessary component of the towns and cities of Ontario and eastern Canada, but had also taken firm roots in the new and growing cities of the west. The playground movement was underway in most parts of Canada, and the amusement park, offering a wide range of activities, was very popular and in growing demand. The field of landscape architecture was perceived in a positive sense, led by the dedicated Frederick G. Todd of Montreal. The public parks movement reached its zenith in the early 1900's, with the idea of land set aside for public recreation being for the most part politically acceptable in all parts of Ontario.

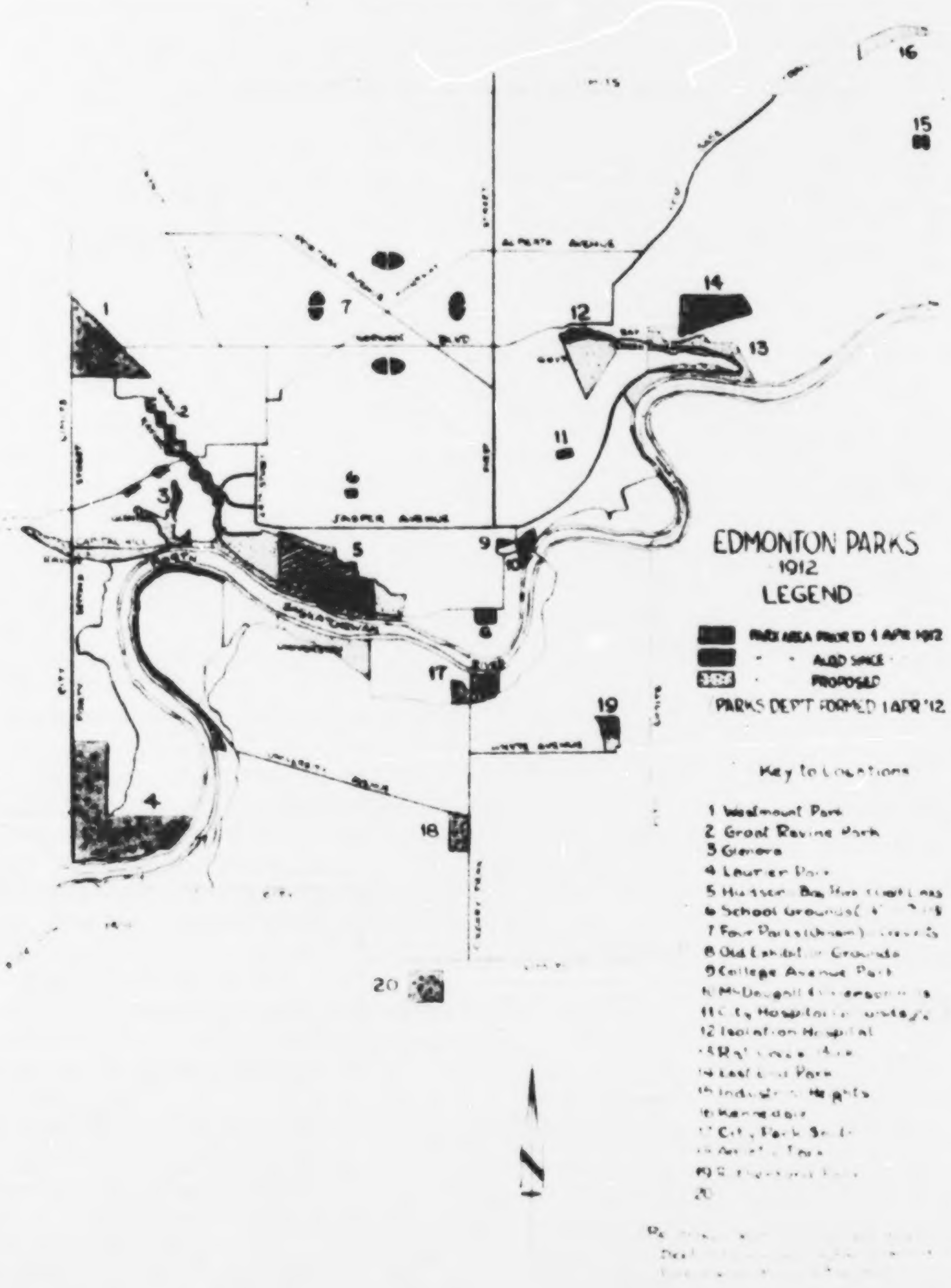
EDMONTON PARKS
1912
LEGEND
PARK AREA PRIOR TO 1 APR 1912
" " ADDED SINCE
" PROPOSED
PARKS DEP'T FORMED 1 APR '12
Key to Locations
1 Westmount Park
2 Groat Ravine Park
3 Geneva
4 Laurier Park
5 Hudson Bay
6 School Grounds
7 Four Parks (shown)
8 Old Exhibition Grounds
9 College Avenue Park
10 McDougall
11 City Hospital
12 Isolation Hospital
14 Park
15 Industrial Heights
17 City Park Site
20
JASPER AVENUE
ALBERTA AVENUE
SASKATCHEWAN
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Fig. 5.34 Map of Edmonton - showing parks, 1912.

NOTES

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44. Virtually all the major plans focusing on the land-uses and strategies for growth of the Ottawa region, such as that of the **Holt Commission** (1915, the **Cauchon Studies** (1925-28), and the **Greber Plan** (1950), projected many of Todd's original recommendations, for which he has not been properly credited.
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57. Paula Gorsline, "Origin of Parks in Stratford, Ontario," unpublished paper, University of Guelph, 1971, p. 3.
58. Correspondence, Frederick Todd to Thomas Orr, December 31, 1904.
59. Reprint from **The Financial Post**, May 19, 1962.
60. "The Vancouver Park System 1886-1929: A Product of Local Businessman," **Urban History Review**, no. 3-78, p. 37.
61. Ibid.

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62. **The History and Development of Assiniboine Park Zoo**, City of Winnipeg, Parks and Recreation Department, December, 1972, p.
63. J.R. Wright, **Land-Use and Reservation for Public Recreation in the North Saskatchewan River Valley**, City of Edmonton, Alberta, Nov. 1962, p. 9.
64. In 1947, A.C. (Sandy) Patterson was appointed Superintendent of Parks, while the third Superintendent, J.R. (Jack) Wright was appointed on March 1, 1958.
65. Elsie McFarland, **Development of Public Recreation in Canada**, Canadian Parks/Recreation Association, Toronto, 1975, p. 13.

6 FORM AND FUNCTION OR URBAN PARKS

Contact with and contemplation of natural scenery, especially of pastoral scenery, brings positive refreshment to the mind. Green pastures and still waters now, as in the days of the Hebrew poet, restore the soul.

W.A. Sillers, 1897

Growth Patterns

By the advent of the First World War, Ontario had changed dramatically in physical, socio-economic and political terms. Upper Canada had become Ontario within Confederation, and the population of the province had grown from 952,000 in 1861 to a population of 2,527,289 by 1911. The urban population surpassed the rural population shortly after the turn of the century and the towns and cities were either growing, or losing population, depending on their industrial base and accessibility. For example, centres such as Bowmanville, Bradford, Millbrook, Napanee, Newburgh, Omemee, Port Hope and Port Perry had declined significantly in population since the 1880's, while Acton, Bracebridge, Cambellford, Midland and Peterborough had grown dramatically (Fig. 6.1). Of course, Toronto led the way, moving from 86,415 persons in 1881 to over 376,470 persons in 1911, a 335% increase. The northern part of the province was in its early developmental stage, its resource potential yet untapped.

If transportation was the basis of urban growth or decline in the latter quarter of the 1800's, then it was industrialism that became the catalyst in the decades preceeding the War of 1914-1918. Yet, despite the effects of the economic base on most Ontario municipalities, as Glazebrook states, "The difference between the large cities and the small ones was still more of degree than kind."[1] Excepting Toronto, the villages, towns and small cities were basically self-contained through the late 1800's (Fig. 6.2). No one was inordinately removed from the countryside, many people owned carriages, and bicycles were very common. While many municipalities had established public parks by the early 1900's these were often inadequate in size, and often unitary in number, resulting in a rather serious lack of space for relaxation, fresh air, greenery, sports and games.

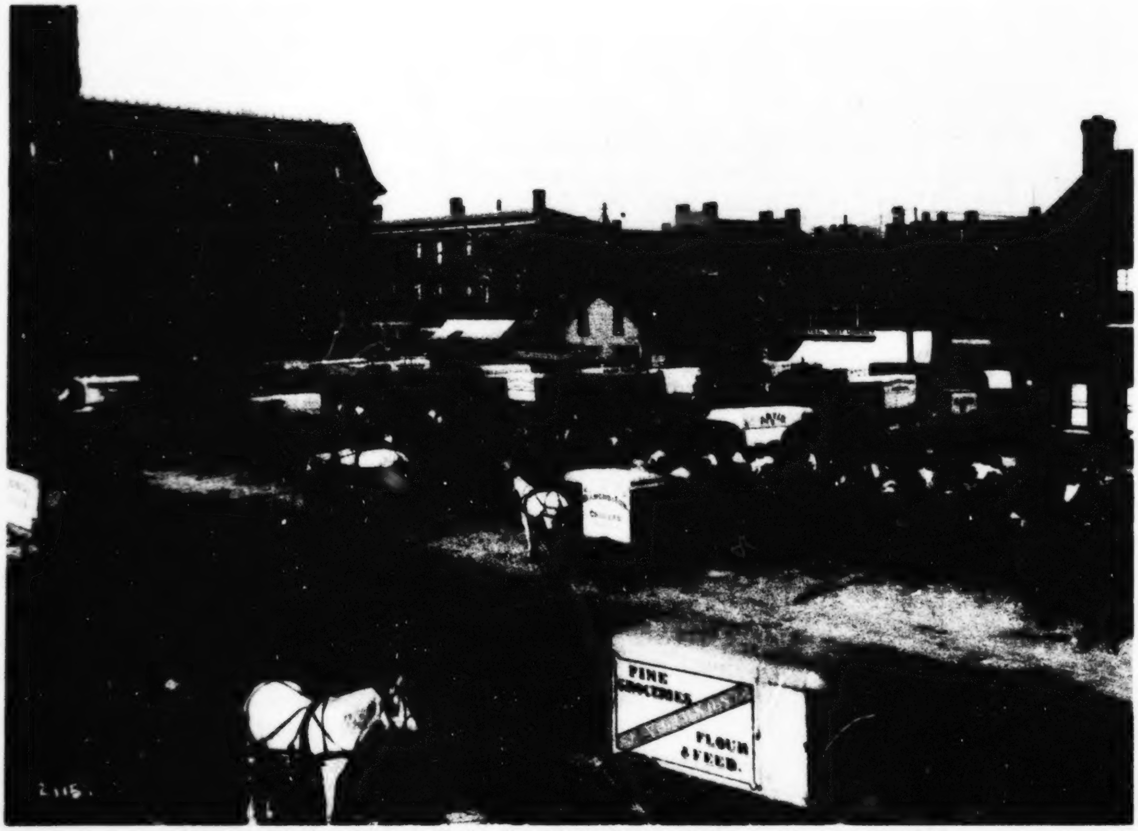
FINE GROCERIES
FLOUR & FEED
2115.

Fig. 6.1 Market Square, Belleville, 1911. Public Archives Canada/ C 5648.

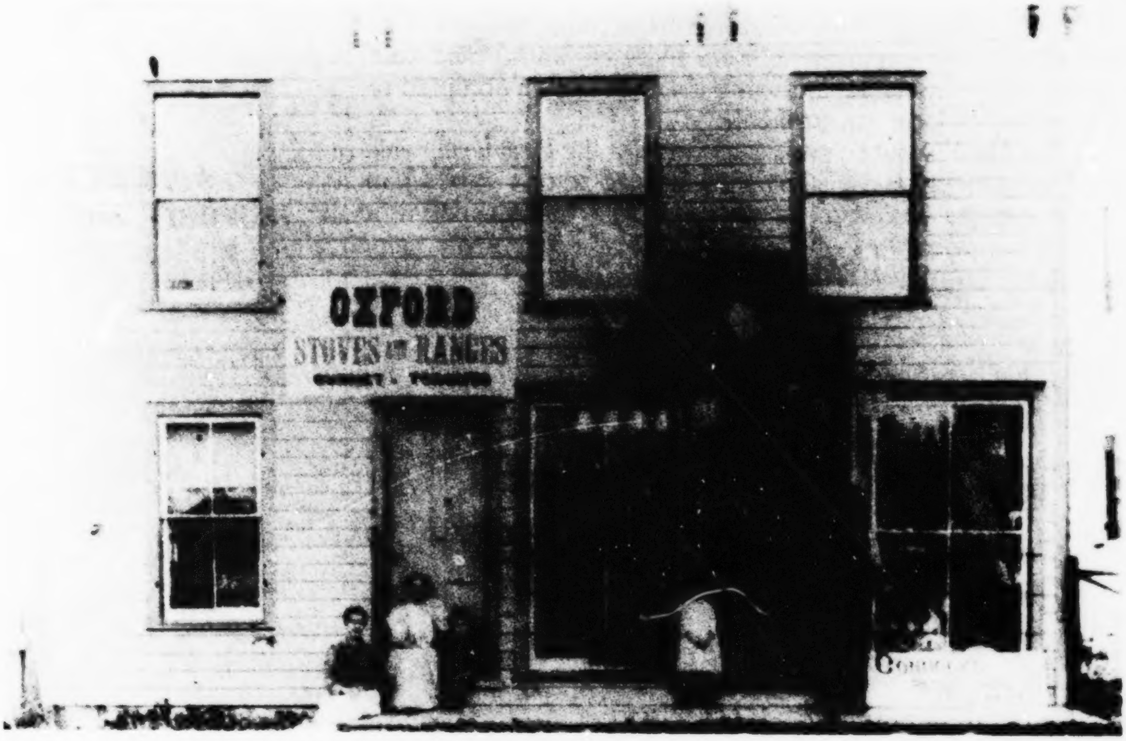
OXFORD
STOVES RANGES

Fig. 6.2 Main street stores in Ontario town. c. 1890. Ontario Archives.

There was little consideration given to town planning, and "shores of rivers and lakes were spoiled by factories or railway lines, streets were not widened when that could be done at low cost, and beautiful old houses were wantonly torn down in the name of progress."[2] At the same time, civic order was well established, electrical power was available in major towns and cities, full-time fire departments were more common, civic water supplies were available and waste disposal was an accepted responsibility of local government.

The ideal of public parks supported at the local level, while slow to gain general acceptance, evolved into a public park movement by the turn of the century, strengthened and

Fig. 6.3 Port Dover: picnic in Globe Park. c. 1912.
Ontario Archives/ S 9658.

abetted with the passing of the Public Parks Act in 1833. The need for children's playgrounds had been established much to the chagrin of the more traditional parks personnel. Parks were still viewed by the purists as serving a basic function of peaceful contemplation of a pastoral landscape as a relief to the frenzy of the urban scene. The automobile's popularity and numbers had not affected the bulk of the population. Henry Ford's production line was not yet born, and life was relatively simple (Fig. 6.3).

The City Park: Its 'True' Function

With the advent of greater incomes, growing towns and cities, and a greater desire for more organized athletics and games, there was a growing tendency to look upon the public park as the focus for all types of public entertainment from librairies, to race-tracks, from museums and zoological gardens to amusement rides and similar attractions. Hence a deep concern began to grow in the minds of park officials and park board members about the mis-use and misappropriation of public parks for a variety of totally inappropriate functions. Professor C.S. Sargent, editor of the influential New York magazine **Garden and Forest**, expressed concern as early as 1891. He argued that a park's 'true' function was "not to furnish instruction nor pure air nor a place for exercise on foot or on horseback."[3] In an editorial written eight years later, Sargent's views had not changed, and he stated the case in succinct terms.

> *The danger (of understanding the purpose is aggravated by the prevailing ignorance regarding the purpose of a park. One man has the idea that it must be a centre for all sorts of noisy sports, for festivities of the brass band, fireworks and barbecue. Another's idea is that of a "pretty" place, a huge flower garden, spangled with gay exotics, stripped with*

> *ribbon-borders, and beds of brick-colored geraniums uttering their chromatic shrieks on every hand. The true conception of a park is that of a place where the urban inhabitants can, to the fullest extent,obtain the genuine recreation coming from the peaceful enjoyment of an idealized rural landscape in rest-giving contrast to their wonted existence amidst the city's turmoil. In these ways the purpose of many anobly conceived public park is theatened with perversion.*[4]

Sargent was not opposed unalterably to various recreation opportunities, however, "but wherever such introductions have been successful they have been incidental and subordinate to the controlling motive of the park which has been steadily kept in view."[5] He stated that since the object of a park and a zoo or botanic garden were utterly distinct, these should be entirely separate, even if placed in grounds adjoining a park. He further stated that "neither recreation, in the specific case of amusement, nor education, even under the most attractive guise, but refreshment, pure and simple for body and mind is the primary office of the public park."[6]

The Picturesque

Although fresh air and sunshine were believed to be important, the park adherents felt that beauty of nature was paramount, since beauty was innate in every human soul, "even in those that are most deeply degraded and are least definitely conscious of its possesion."[7] The gardens of the seventeenth and eighteenth century had been designed to describe the relationship between art and nature so that:

- the garden should orient itself to the image of nature;

- it should be something different from the surrounding landscape;
- the difference should be an unnatural contrast, but that of emphasizing nature in the image of nature and reason.[8]

The end product of the picturesque was a rural, pastoral, managed landscape viewed as the antithesis to the surrounding man-made urban form, the antidote to artificiality. In this view, the proponents of the picturesque often overlooked the fact that what had been created was itself artifical! The benefit of this landscape was reflected in the perception of the public park as giving "rest to the eyes and mind, to heart and soul, through the soothing charm, the fresh and inspiring influence, the impersonal, unexciting pleasure which nothing but the works of Nature offer to man."[7] It therefore followed that when Art comes to Nature's help in the urban setting, where "Nature by herself is powerless to produce real beauty, then, only is the full result attained."[9] Such a view clearly indicates the concern for the need to include "nature" in the barren playground setting.

Keep Off the Grass

The picturesque theory supported the idea that since natural beauty was one of the major factors in establishing sound minds in sound bodies, it followed that a wonted and careless destruction of this natural beauty would affect public health. The "Keep Off the Grass" doctrine that arose in this period was based on much more than the mere unplesant appearance of worn-out grass and muddy paths. Man's health and very spirit were threatened since it was believed that one of the "inalienable rights of man was to enjoy the unimpaired beauty of the world into which he has been born, and that it is the duty of society which has inherited this beauty to transmit it unimpaired to society."[10] The prevelant view of the day was that there was

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a special beauty in a broad lawn of fresh-hued greensward, which could be appreciated only by looking at it, and not by treading it underfoot (Fig. 6.4). Sargent complained, "Park visitors think they can eat their cake and have it too. They wish to enjoy the beauty of a finely kept lawn and yet daily trample the sod."[11] While large sections were rescued for playing areas and games, "spaces reserved for smooth lawn and ornamental planting should not be overrun."[12] Aside from the costs of repair, the true value of the grounds was seen as lost for those who wished "to gratify a refined taste for the beautiful nature."[13]

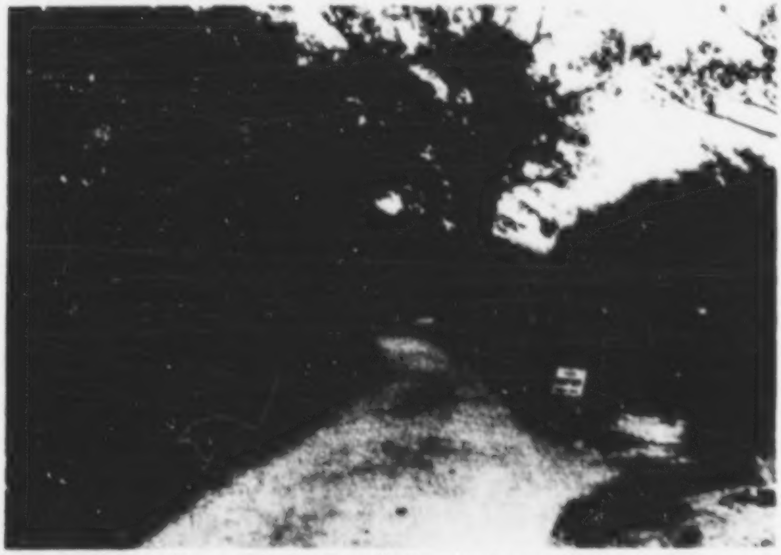


Fig. 6.4 "Keep Off the Grass", Toronto Island Park, c. 1910. Public Archives Canada/ PA 68168.

An apt description of the public park's function, at the turn of the century, is provided by John C. Olmsted (the son of Frederick Law Olmsted) in a speech given in 1897 at the initial meeting of the Park and Outdoor Act Association. Olmstead stated that

> *The true purpose of a large public park is to provide for the dwellers in cities convenient opportunity to enjoy beautiful natural scenery and to obtain occasional relief from the nervous strain due to the excessive artificality of city life.*[14]

An expansion of this purpose was also given by Olmsted as a statement of the scope and function of a large public park, as shown in Appendix F.

Characteristics of Early Park Development

There are a number of key characteristics or contributions to park development in the Victorian period in Ontario, these being the major characteristics:

- public parks were initiated by the elite sector of society in the 1850's before the middle class assumed a greater responsibility in the 1870's and 1880's.
- parks were viewed as idealized landscapes very frequently at the edge of town and to some degree were aloof from reality, a rural relief or escape from the busy commercial town or city;
- parks represented art and the picturesque;
- the park served a dual purpose of function and sentiment and, in the view of park advocates, was a source of health and moral force;
- vigorous recreational activities were viewed as secondary to the prime purpose of the park, refreshment of body, mind and spirit through contact with nature.

- a fountain and a band-shell were considered intrinsic elements of every "city" park (Fig. 6.5, 6.6, 6.7).

And of course, it would appear that every town and city named a public square or park in Queen Victoria's name, and perhaps a major street as well. Prince Albert, the Queen's consort, was also recognized in the same manner in many municipalities of the period.

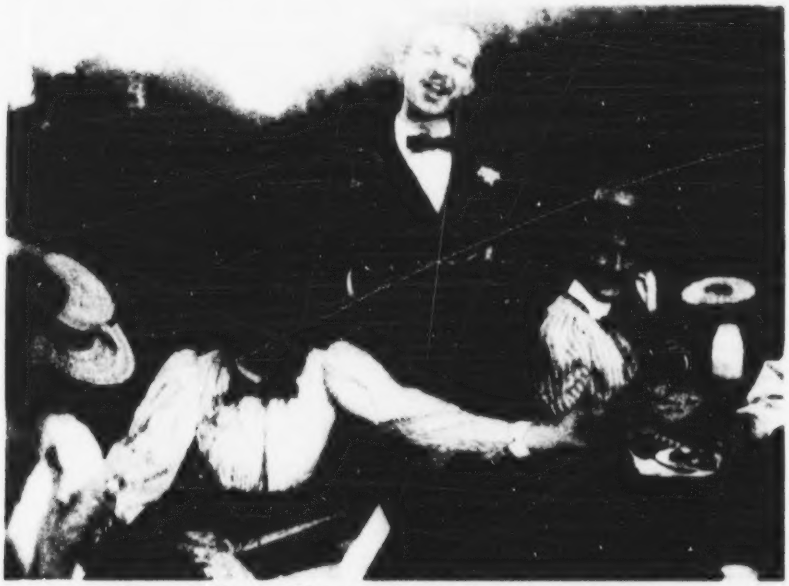


Fig. 6.5 Picnic, Choates Woods, Port Hope, 1897-8.
Ontario Archives/ S 16082.

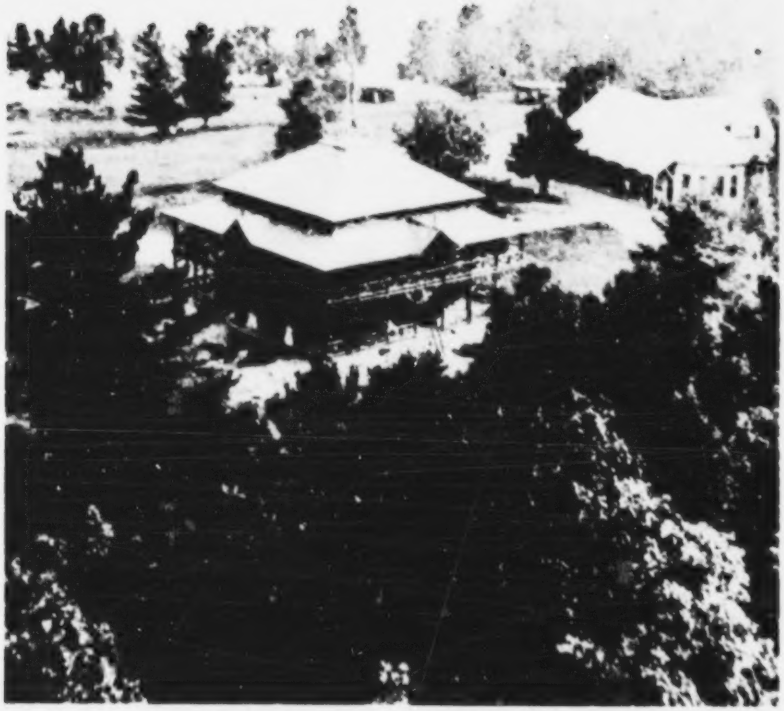


Fig. 6.6 Scarborough Heights Pavillion, 1875-80. Ontario Archives ST 127.

Park Systems

The early parks in many Ontario municipalities were located at the periphery of the residential area, and were frequently adjacent to the "better class" homes. City Park in Kingston, Garrison Reverse in Toronto, and High Park in Toronto are prime examples. There are other examples in early Ontario settlements of park sites selected in the already established commercial sectors of the city, such as Gore Park in Hamilton, and Victoria Park in London (originally a military reserve). The early park movement viewed the acquisition of a unitary park as the goal, and little, if any, consideration was given to the idea of a series or system of public recreation areas. It was only in the early 1900's that the need for different parks serving different functions for all people was recognized. Of course, with the limited recreational activities of the time, before the advent of playground apparatus and organized athletic games, and with the emphasis on the beauty of the natural landscape, the single park provided a reasonable opportunity for most outdoor pursuits of the period (Fig. 6.8). The City of Winnipeg was one of the first cities in Canada to initiate the idea of a number of

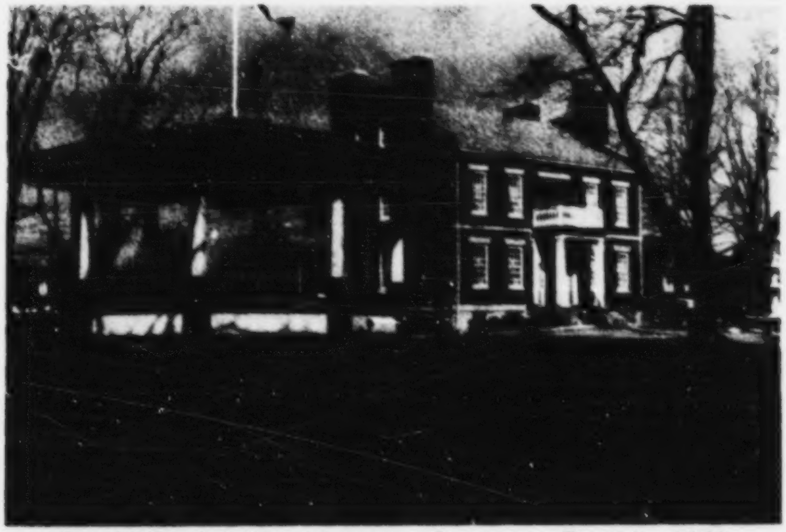


Fig. 6.7 Band-shell in civic square, Gananoque. Erected c. 1880.

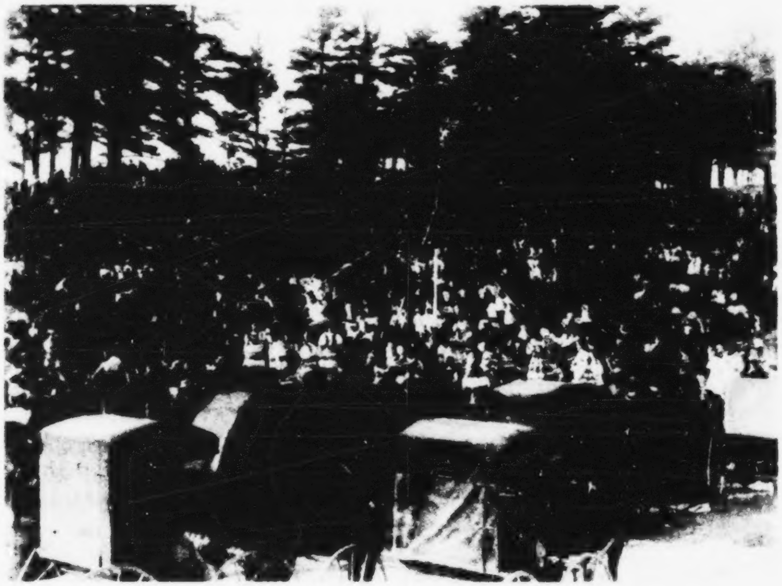


Fig. 6.8 Jubilee Day Celebrations, Town Park, Port Hope. June 22, 1897. Ontario Archives/ S 16050.

smaller sized parks distributed throughout the city to serve a broader range of persons, making the parks much more accessible to everyone, while respecting the need for at least one large park area to serve the traditional function of a rural retreat from the city.

Ontario did not adopt the linear type parkways and series of connected park spaces as conceived in Boston and other American cities of the period. Such a concept was to come many years later in the post-World War II period.

Leadership

As had been noted in previous chapters, no personalities emerged from the public park movement in Ontario to achieve the status of a William Jennings Bryant, or an Andrew Jackson Downing or Frederick Law Olmsted, all of the United States. Canada can boast of no such influential crusaders in the field of park development. But perhaps this is also true for much of the realm of civic development in this period under the guiding but powerful hand of the British appointed Governor-General. Probably the key factor is one of population and density, recognizing that by 1900 the greater percentage of Ontario's population was classified rural, with Toronto as a major city (156,000), and only Ottawa and Hamilton close to 60,000 population, the others being well below such numbers. The cause was not profound, as in the much larger American cities to the south, and the need for public parklands did not appear to surface as a provincial issue. Early developments were spearheaded by civic councils, leading local influentials, and "grey" committees.

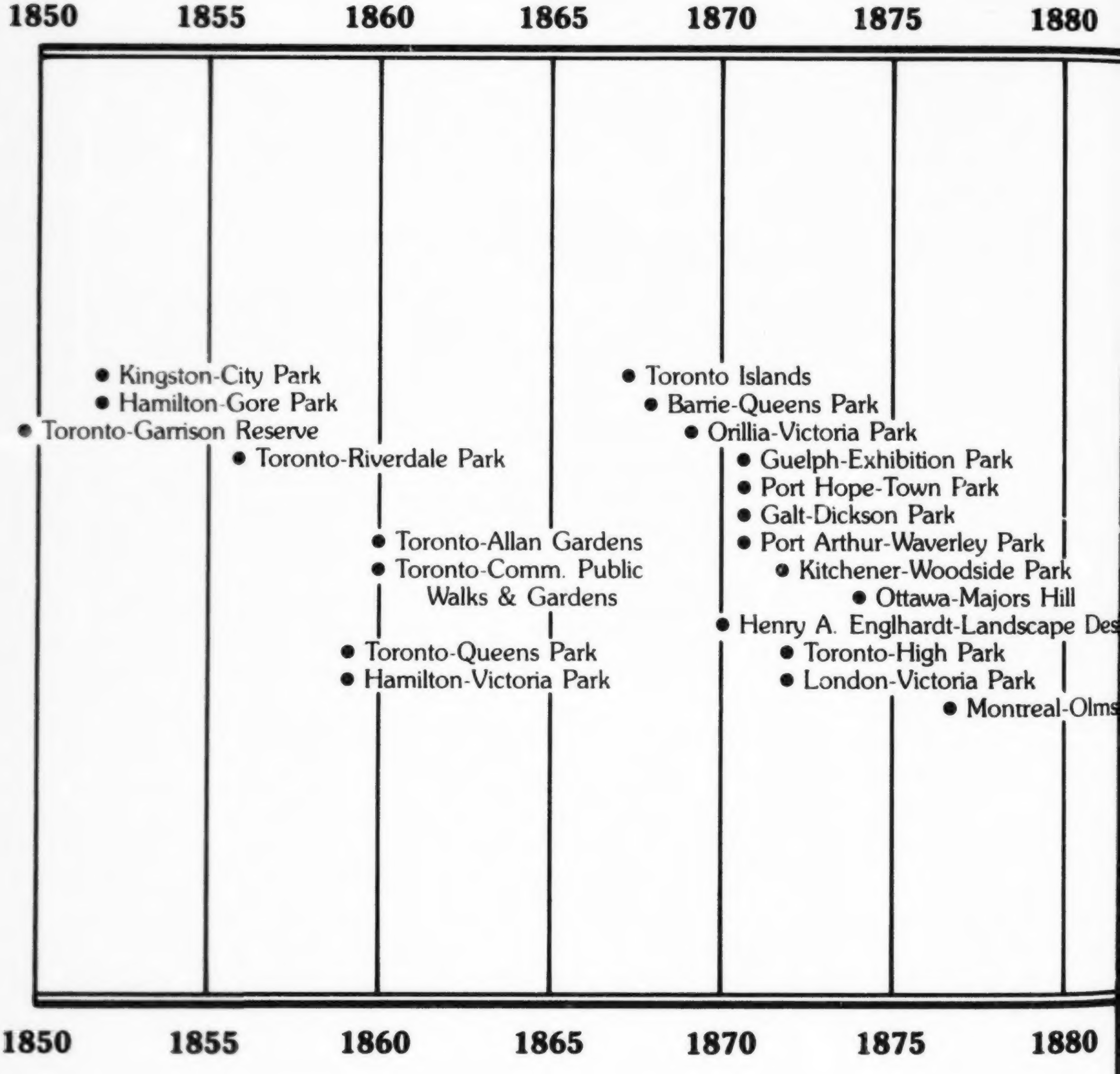
One of the few personalities that emerged from the public park movement period in Ontario is Frederick G. Todd, an apprentice of Frederick Law Olmstead. Todd migrated to Montreal from Boston at the age of 24, and carried on an active consulting practice in landscape architecture for many years. His abilities were evidenced in the range of commissions in many parts of Canada, **Report for the Ottawa Improvement Commission** being probably the most noteworthy, along with the basic site plan for Assiniboine Park in Winnipeg.

Todd was a founding member of the Town Planning Institute of Canada (1922) and was president of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (1945-46), and served as a municipal councillor for the city of Montreal for a period of six years before his death in 1948.E

Other persons or groups who played a significant role in Ontario's early park development are the Honourable George W. Allan who donated the original five acre site for Allan Gardens in Toronto; Charles Ernest Woolverton, one of the few practicing landscape architects in Ontario prior to 1910 who contributed professionally and politically; John Howard, an architect and land surveyor who donated the original 165 acres of High Park to the citizens of Toronto; Sir Oliver Mowat, Premier of the Province of Ontario who in 1880 pushed through the **Act for the Preservation of the Natural Scenery About Niagara Falls**; the National Council of Women which is recognized as the motivating force behind Canada's first supervised playgrounds; Thomas Orr, Chairman of the Stratford Parks Board who turned aside the greedy hands of the CPR in their quest for a rail line into Central Stratford on the present site of the Stratford Theatre; Mr. James Egan, prominent citizen and Alderman of London who spearheaded the acquisition of Victoria Park. Of course there were the great number of lesser known persons in many Ontario municipalities who donated land for public park use, such as Archibald Thomason and his wife in Barrie, or Mrs. Catharine Vickers in Fort William, as examplars of enlightened philanthropy at a very early phase of park acquisition in Ontario.

Park Boards

As further evidence of the general benign attitude to the passage of the **Public Parks Act**, there was no general stampede by the local councils to take advantage of the terms of the Act. In fact, five years passed before the first parks board was formed in Ontario, the honour accruing to the city of Port Arthur in the establishment of a Parks board in 1888. However, because of a lack of interest in park affairs, the Board was disbanded in 1893, and not resurrected for another fifteen years,



J.R. Wright 1984.

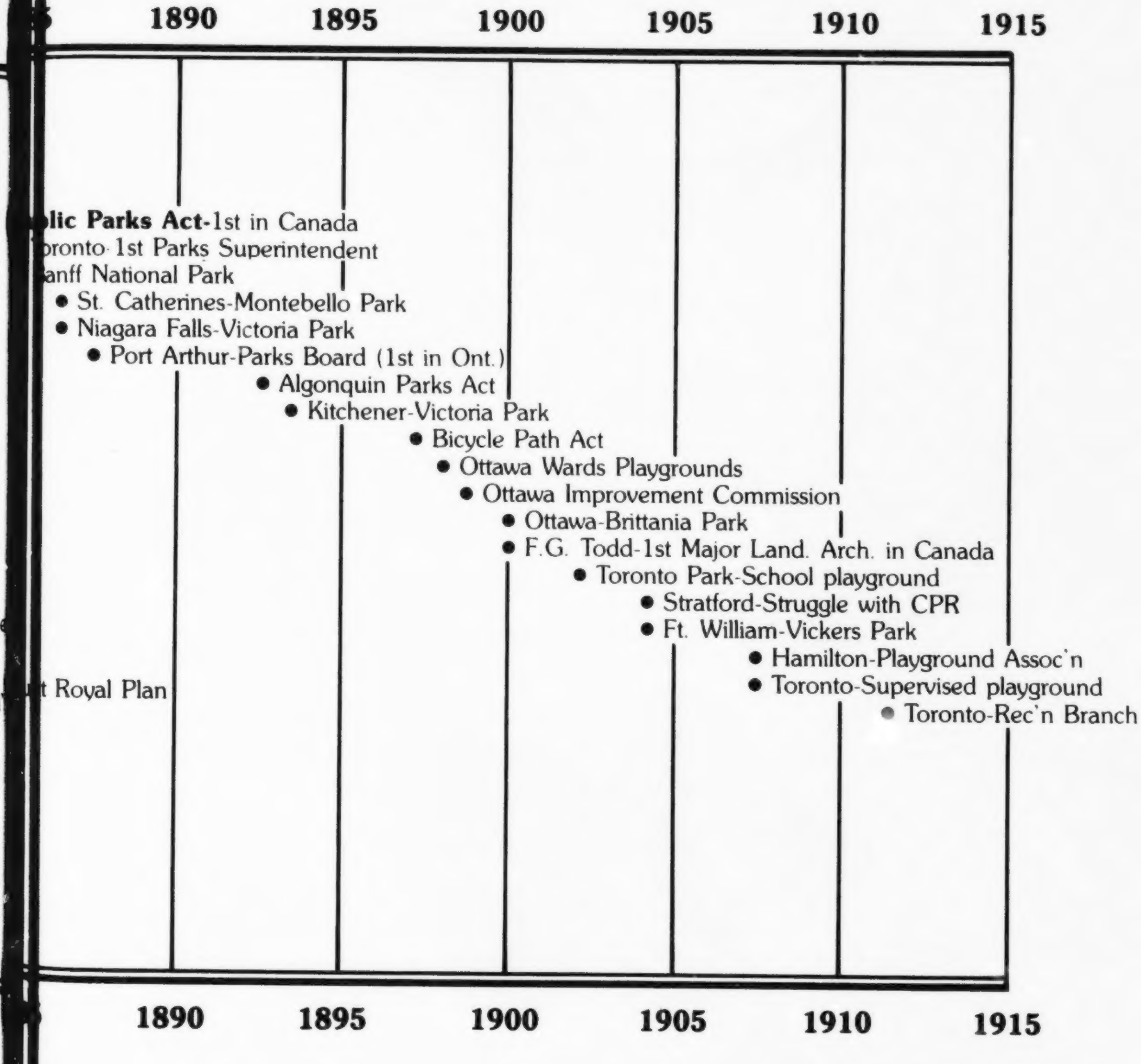


Fig. 6.9 Public Park Development in Ontario up to World War I (showing key events)

as described in chapter 4. Ottawa established a board ten years after the **Public Parks Act** became legislation, and other cities followed over the years. Many municipalities pushed forward with park acquisition and development, with direction coming from committees of council, apparently in an effort to retain direct authority in matters of council jurisdiction, rather than delegate authority to a parks board.

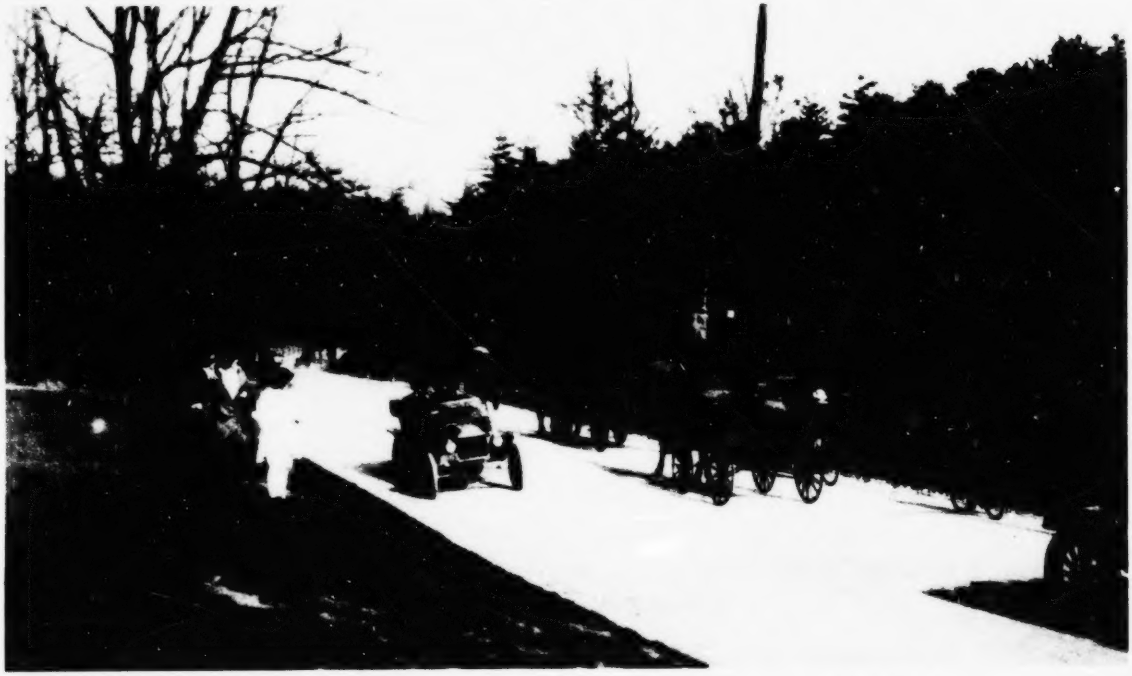


Fig. 6.10 Automobiles (buggies and bicycles), on new road in High Park, Toronto, High Park, May, 1914. Public Archives Canada/ PA 61041.

Concluding Statement

The public park movement in Ontario, rooted in the 1840's and 50's, struggled in the 60's, took a firm hold in the 70's, was strengthened by provincial legislation in the 80's, gained a broad public acceptance in the 90's, and flourished in the early 1900's in the years preceding the First World War as in the chronological sequence shown in Fig. 6.9.

This was a remarkable period in local park development and in relative terms the development of public parks in Ontario was not to be equalled for another sixty years. Local park development virtually ceased after 1913 (Fig. 6.10), emerged cautiously in the 1920's, and entered a period of repose between 1930 and 1950 due to the Great Depression and the Second World War. Major public park development became a priority in most parts of Canada in the late 1950's, reaching a climax in the early 1970's. This more recent period is unveiled in **Part III** of this **Urban Parks in Ontario** series, covering the years between 1914 and the present.

NOTES

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1. G.P. de T. Glazebrook, **Life in Ontario, A Social History**, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1968, p. 178.
2. Ibid., p. 179.
3. C.S. Sargent, "The True Function of City Parks," **Garden and Forest**, The Garden and Forest Publishing Co., New York, March 4, 1891, p. 97.
4. C.S. Sargent, "The Administration of Public Parks," **Garden and Forest**, February 6, 1889, p. 61.
5. Ibid., March 4, 1891, p. 97.
6. Ibid., p. 98.
7. Ibid., June 6, 1894, p. 221.
8. Galen Cranz, **The Politics of Park Design**, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1892, p. 24.
9. C.S. Sargent, June 6, 1894, p. 221.
10. Ibid., p. 122.
11. C.S. Sargent, February 27, 1895, p. 81.
12. Ibid., p. 82.
13. Ibid., p. 82.
14. John C. Olmsted, "The True Purpose of A Large Public Park," in **First Report of The Park And Outdoor Art Association**, Louisville, Kentucky, 1897, p. 12.

APPENDIX A

CHAPTER 20

An Act to provide for the establishment and maintenance of Public Parks in Cities and Towns.

[Assented to 1st February, 1883.]

HER MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:—

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as "The Public Parks Act, 1883."

Establishment of park.

2. A park, or a system of parks, avenues, boulevards and drives, or any of them, may be established in any city or town; and the same, as well as existing parks and avenues, may be controlled and managed in manner hereinafter provided.

(1) In case a petition is presented to the council of any city signed by not less than 500 electors, or to the council of any town signed by not less than 200 electors praying for the adoption of this Act, the council may pass a by-law, giving effect to the petition, with the assent of the electors qualified to vote at municipal elections, given before the final passing of the by-law as provided by the municipal law.

(2) In case the majority of the votes polled on the by-law are in favour thereof, the by-law shall be finally passed by the council at its next regular meeting held after the taking of such vote, or as soon thereafter as may be.

(3) In case the majority of the votes polled on the by-law are in favour thereof, the by-law shall be finally passed by the council at its next regular metting held after the taking of such vote, or as soon thereafter as may be.

Parks to be open to public.

3. All parks, boulevards, avenues, and drives, and approaches thereto, or streets connecting the same, in any city or town where this Act is adopted, shall be open to the public free of all charge, subject to such by-laws, rules, and regulations as the Board may make as to the use thereof.

4. In case of the adoption of this Act, the general management, regulation and control of all existing parks and avenues, and of all properties both real and personal, applicable to the maintenance of parks belonging to the city or town, and of all

parks, avenues, bouleards and drives which may thereafter be acquired and established under the provisions of this Act, shall be vested in an exercised by a Board, to be called The Board of Park Management.

Parks to be under control of Board of Park Management.

(2) The authority of the Board shall not extend to any streets open at the time of the adoption of the Act, with the exception of streets which may be expressly specified in the by-law adopting the Act, or which at any time, or from time to time afterwards, in pursuance of an agreement between the council and the Board, the council shall by by-law declare to be subject to this Act.

(3) Nothing in this Act contained shall authorize the Board to assume possession or control of any Exhibition Park in or belonging to the city or town, without the consent of both the Municipal Council and of any Electoral District Society, Agricultural or Exhibition Association, having an interest therein.

Constitution of Board.

5. The Board shall be a body politic and corporate, and shall be composed of the mayor of the city or town and of six other persons who shall be residents of the city or town, but not members of the council, and shall be appointed by the council on the nomination of the mayor.

Tenure of office.

6. The appointed members of the Board shall hold their office for three years, except in the case of the members of the first Board, two of whom shall hold office until the first day of February in the year following the first appointments, two for one year, and two for two years, from said first day of February; said members retiring in rotation, two each year, the order of such retirement to be determined by lot among themselves at their first meeting; but every member of the Board shall continue in office after the time named until his successor is appointed, and may be reappointed by the council.

(2) In case of a vacancy by the death or resignation of a

member, or from any cause other than the expiration of the time for which he was appointed, the member appointed in his place shall hold office for the remainder of his term.

(3) Subject to these provisions, each of the appointed members shall hold office for three years from the first day of February in the year in which he is appointed.

(4) The first appointment of members of the Board shall be made at the first regular meeting of the council held after the final passing of the by-law.

(5) Thereafter the appointments shall be made annually, at the first meeting of the council held after its organization; and any vacancy arising from any cause other than the expiration of the time for which the member was appointed, shall be filled at the first meeting of the council held after the occurrence of the vacancy.

(6) The members of the first Board, within ten days after their appointment, and on such day and hour as the mayor shall appoint (notice of the appointment, in writing, signed by the mayor, having been duly sent to the address of each member at least one week before the day and hour named therein), shall meet at the office of the mayor for the purpose of organization, shall elect one of their number chairman, and shall appoint a secretary, who may be either one of their own members, or any other person they may select.

(7) If for any reason appointments are not made at the said dates, the same shall be made as soon as may be thereafter.

(8) The chairman and secretary shall hold their places at the pleasure of the Board, or for such period as the Board shall prescribe.

(9) When the chairman or secretary is absent, or unable to act, the Board may appoint a chairman or secretary pro tem.

(10) The Board shall meet at least once every calendar

month, and at such other times as they may think fit.

(11) The chairman or any two members may summon a special meeting of the Board, by giving at least two days notice in writing, to each member, specifying the purpose for which the meeting is called.

(12) The office of any member of the Board, who shall be absent from the meetings of the Board for three successive months, without leave of absence from the Board, or without reasons satisfactory to the Board, shall be declared vacant by the Board, and notice thereof shall be given to the Council at the next meeting of the Council.

(13) No business shall be transacted at any special or general meeting, unless four members are present.

(14) All orders and proceedings of the Board shall be entered in books to be kept by them for that purpose, and shall be signed by the chairman for the time being.

(15) The orders and proceedings so entered, and purporting to be so signed, shall be deemed to be original orders and proceedings, and the books may be produced and read upon any judicial proceedings as evidence of the orders and proceedings.

Payment of expenses of Board.

7. The Members of the Board shall serve without compensation. Each Member shall be entitled to receive his actual disbursements for expenses in visiting or superintending the park when the visit or service is made or rendered by direction of the Board.

Members of the Board or of the Council not to be interested in any contract.

(a) No member of the Board, or alderman, or member of the city or town council, shall have any contract with the Board, or be pecuniarily interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract or work relating to the park or park property.

Board may employ clerks, etc.

8. The Board may employ all necessary clerks, agents and servants, and may prescribe their duties and compensation.

Books, etc., to be kept in the office of the Board.

9. The Board shall keep in the office of the Board all books, maps, plans, papers and documents used in and pertaining to the business of the Board.

(2) All books kept by the Board shall be open to the examination of the members of the Council, and of any other person or persons appointed for that purpose by the Council.

Board to keep regular accounts.

10. The Board shall keep distinct and regular accounts of their receipts, payments, credits, and liabilities; and the accounts shall be audited by the auditors of the municipality in like manner as other accounts of the municipality, and shall thereafter be laid before the Council by the Board.

Power to make by-laws, etc.

11. The Board may from time to time pass by-laws for the use, regulation, protection and government of the park or parks, approaches thereto, and streets connecting the same, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act or any law of the Province.

(2) The Board shall, with respect to street railways, have the powers conferred upon Municipal Councils By "The Street Railway Act, 1883", so far as relates to any streets or approaches under the control of the Board; but not street or other railway shall enter upon or pass through the park or parks.

(3) The Board shall have power to license hacks and other vehicles for use in the park or parks; and to let from year to year, or for any time not exceeding ten years, the right to sell refreshments, other than spirituous, fermented or intoxicating liquors, within the park or parks, under such regulations as the Board shall prescribe.

(4) The Board shall have power to attach penalties for the infraction of their by-laws; and the same shall be enforced by summary proceedings before the Police Magistrate of the city or town, or in his absence before any justice of the peace having jurisdiction therein, or before any justice of the peace having ju-

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risdiction in the locality in which the offence is committed, in the manner and to the extent that by-laws passed by municipal councils may be enforced.

(5) The by-laws shall be sufficiently authenticated by being signed by the chairman of the Board; and a copy of any by--law, written or printed, and certified to be a true copy by any member of the Board, shall be received as evidence in any court of justice or elsewhere without proof of any such signature; unless it is specially pleaded or alleged that the signature to the original by-law has been forged.

Property may be granted, etc., to municipality for park purposes.

12. Real and personal property may be devised, granted conveyed, bequeathed, or given to the city or town for the purpose of the improvement or ornamentation of the park or parks of the city or town, or of the approaches thereto, or of the streets connecting therewith; or for the establishment or maintenance on park property of museums, zoological or other gardens, collections or natural history, observatories, monuments, or works of art; upon such trusts and conditions as may be prescribed by the donor.

Power to acquire land.

13. The Board shall have power and authority to select and acquire, by purchase or otherwise, or to lease, the lands, rights and privileges needful for park purposes.

(2) The lands purchased by the Board, together with those assumed by them as and for park purposes at the time of the adoption of this Act, shall not together exceed, in the case of cities 1,000 acres, and in the case of towns 500 acres; but lands in excess of these quantities may be taken by devise or gift.

(3) The title of all lands purchased shall be taken to the city or town.

(4) The Board shall have power to let any lands not immediately required for park purposes.

(5) If the Board find that they have more land than is re-

quired for park purposes, they may sell or otherwise dispose of the said land, not required, in such manner, and upon such terms of cash or credit, or part cash, and part credit, as they may think most advantageous.

Power to enter on lands and appropriate streams, etc.

14. The Board, their engineers, surveyors, servants and workmen from time to time, and at such times as the Board shall see fit, may enter into and upon the lands of any persons, bodies politic or corporate, in the municipality, or in the case of a city within ten miles, and in case of a town within five miles thereof, and may survey, set out, and ascertain such parts thereof as are required for the purposes of the Board, including parks, bouleards, avenues and drives and approaches thereto, and including also the supply of water for artificial lakes, fountains, and other park purposes; and (with the consent of all parties interested capable of consenting) may divert and appropriate any river, ponds of wateer, springs or streams of water therein which the engineer, surveyor or other person authorized in this behalf by the Board shall judge suitable and proper for the said purposes; and the Board may contract with the owner or occupier of the said lands, and with those having a right or interest in the said water, for the purchase or renting thereof, or of any part thereof, or of any privilege which may be required for the purposes of the Board. But the Board shall not interfere with the water-works of any municipal corporation or of any company.

Arbitration.

15. In case of any disagreement between the Board and the owner or occupier of, or any other person interested in, such lands, or any person having an interest in the said water, or in the natural flow thereof, or in any such privilege as aforesaid, respecting the amount of purchase money or yearly rental thereof, or as to the damages which the appropriation thereof by the Board will cause, or otherwise, the matter in question

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shall be decided by arbitration in accordance with the provisions of "The Municipal Act," and as hereinafter provided.

Arbitration provisions in Municipal Act incorporated herewith.

16. The sections of "The Municipal Act" relating to the appointment of arbitrators and procedure, and numbered 367 to 38, both inclusive, and the sections numbered 456 to 459, both inclusive, relating to compensation for lands taken, are incorporated with, and are to be taken and road as part of this Act, and shall apply to the Board as if the Board were specially named therein instead of the municipal council.

Board to make yearly estimates.

17. The Board shall in the month of March in every year make up, or cause to be made up, an estimate of the sums required during the ensuing financial year; for:
The interest of any money borrowed as herein mentioned;
The amount of the sinking fund; and
The expense of maintaining, improving, and managing the parks, boulevards, avenues, and streets under their control.

(2) The Board shall report their estimate to the Council not later than the first day of April in each year.

Special rate of park purposes.

(3) The Council shall, in addition to all other rates and assessments for municipal purposes, levy and assess in every year a special annual rate sufficient to furnish the amount estimated by the Board to be required for the year, but not exceeding one half-mill in the dollar upon the assessed value of all ratable real and personal property; such rate to be called "The Park Fund Rate." The said rate shall be deemed to be included in the limit of two cents on the dollar authorized by "The Municipal Act" in that behalf exclusive of school rates.

(4) The Council may also, subject as hereinafter provided, on the requisition of the Board, raise by a special issue of debentures of the municipality, to be termed "Park Fund Debentures," the sums required for the purpose of purchasing the lands and privileges reported necessary for park purposes.

(5) It shall not be necessary to submit to the electors a by--law authorizing the issue of debentures in case the annual sum required to meet the annual interest and sinking fund does not, with a reasonable allowance for annual expenses of managing, improving, and maintaining the parks, and other works under the control of the Board, exceed the limit of half a mill in the dollar, any provisions in the Municipal and Assessment Acts, or any special or private Acts relating to the city or town, to the contrary notwithstanding.

(6) The debentures may run for such period as the council thinks fit, not to exceed forty years from the date thereof, and shall be in such sums as the council sees fit, and bear interest not to exceed six per centum per annum, payable half yearly, and shall not be sold below par. They shall be issued, and a record kept of the same, as is provided with respect to other city or town debentures.

Power to issue debentures.

(7) Debentures issued by virtue of this Act, shall form a lien and charge upon all lands which are by this Act declared to the subject to the control and management of the Board.

Prohibitions and penalties.

(8) In case of a sale, the Board may sell free from the said lien, both the purchase money shall be applied to the payment of park debentures, or to the purchase of other lands for park purposes.

(9) During the currency of the debentures the Council shall withhold and retain, as a first charge on the annual rate, the amount required to meet the annual interest of the debentures, and the annual sinking fund to be provided for the retirement thereof as the debentures become due; such sinking fund to be invested and dealt with, as in the case of other municipal debentures.

(10) All moneys realized or payable under this Act shall be received by the treasurer of the municipality in the same man-

ner as other funds, and by him deposited to the credit of the Park Fund, and shall be paid out by him on the orders of the Board; save as to the amount required to meet the interest and provide a sinking fund for debentures.

18. If any person does or commits any of the following acts:-

(a) Wilfully or maliciously hinders, or interrupts, or causes, or procures to be hindered or interrupted, the said Board, or their engineers, surveyors, managers, contractors, servants, agents, workmen, or any of them in the exercise of any of the powers and authorities in this Act authorized and contained;

(b) Wilfully or maliciously lets off or discharges any water so that the same runs waste or useless from, or out of any reservoir, pond, or lake connected with any such park;

(c) Causes any dog or other animal to swim in the water, or throws, or deposits any injurious nuisance, or offensive matter into the water in any reservoir, lake, pond, or other receptacle for water connected with any such park, or upon the ice in case such water is frozen, or in any way fouls the water, or commits any unlawful damage or injury to the works, pipes, or water, or encourages the same to be done;

(d) Lays or causes to be laid any pipe or main to communicate with any pipe or main belonging to the water works connected with any such park or parks, or in any way obtains or uses any water thereof, without the consent of the Board;

(e) Washes or cleanses any cloth, wool, leather, skin or animals, causes any dog or other animal to swim therein, or places any nuisance or offensive thing within the distance of one mile, in the case of a town, or within the distance of three miles in the case of a city, from the source of supply for such water-works, in any river, pond, creek, spring, source or fountain, from which the water for the supply of any such park or

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parks is taken, or conveys, casts, throws, or puts any filth, dead carcase or other noisome or offensive thing therein, or within the distance as above set forth, or causes, permits or suffers the water of any sink, sewer, or drain to run or be conveyed into the same, or causes any other thing to be done whereby the water therein may be in any way tainted or fouled;

(f) Wilfully or maliciously infures, hurts, defaces, tears or destroys any ornamental or shade tree or shrub, or other plant, or any statue, fountain, vase or fixture of ornament or utility, in any street, avenue, drive, park or other public place, under the control of any such Board, or wilfully, negligently or carelessly, suffers or permits any horse or other animal driven by or for him, or any animal belonging to him or in his custody, possession or control, and lawfully on the street or other public place, to break down, destroy or infure any tree standing for use or ornament, in any such Public Park or place;

(g) Wilfully or maliciously injures, hurts, or otherwise molests or disturbs any animals, birds, or fish, kept in any such park or in the lakes or ponds therewith connected;

And if such person is convicted of any such act before a justice of the peace, having jurisdiction in the locality within which the offence is comitted, he shall for every such offence forfeit and pay a sum not exceeding twenty dollars, nor less than one dollr, together with the costs and charges attending the proceedings and conviction; or such offender may be imprisoned with or without hard labour, in the first instance for any term not exceeding thrity days; and the person or persons so offending, shall be liable to an action at law at the suit of the Board, to make good any damage done by him, her or them.

Commissioners of police
to detail policemen
for service in the park.

19. It shall be the duty of the Board of Commissioners of Police of the city and town, upon the request of the Board of Park management, to detail for service in any of the public

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grounds under the care of the Park Board, so many of the police force as the Board of Police Commissioners may deem necessary to maintain order and protect property therein; and any policeman on duty in the grounds may remove therefrom any person guilty of a violation of any of the provisions of this Act, or of any of the rules and regulations established by the Board.

Protection and powers of officers.

20. The Board of Park Management and the officers thereof shall have the like protection in the exercise of their offices and the execution of their duties, as Justices of the Peace have under the laws of this Province; and the watchmen and other officers of the Board, when in the discharge of their duties, shall be ex-officio possessed of all the powers and authorities of constables.

Limitation of actions.

21. Any action against any person for anything done in pursuance of this Act, shall be brought within six calendar months next after the act committed; or in the case there shall be a continuation of damages, then within one year after the original cause of action first arose.

Act to be incorporated with Municipal and Assessment Acts.

22. Upon the coming into operation of this Act in any municipality, it shall as regards such municipality be deemed to be incorporated with the Municipal and Assessment Acts for the time being affecting such municipality.

Forms.

23. The forms in the schedule hereto may be used for the purposes of this Act, or any forms to the like effect, and the recitals contained in the said forms shall be deemed sufficient, any provisions of "The Municipal Act" to the contrary notwithstanding.

APPENDIX B

CHAPTER 44

An Act to Amend The Public Park Act.

[Assented to 4th May, 1891].

HER MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:-

Rev. Stat., c. 190, s. 2, sub-s. 2, amended.

1. Sub-section 1 of section 2, sections 3, 4, 5 and 12 and sub-section 3 of section 13 of The Public Parks Act are amended by inserting the words "county, township or village" after the word "town" wherever the same occurs in the said section or sub-sections.

Rev. Stat., c. 190, s. 2, amended.

2. Sub-section 2 of section 2 of the said Act is hereby amended by inserting the words "county or" after the word "any" in the first line of the said sub-section, and by inserting the words "or township" after the word "town" in the third line of the said sub-section, and by inserting the words "or to the council of any village signed by not less than 75 electors" after the word "electors" in the third line of said sub-section.

Rev. Stat., c. 190, s. 5, amended.

3. The following is added as sub-section 5 of section 2 of the said Act:-

(5) In case a petition, signed as aforesaid, is presented to a county council it shall not be necessary before the final passing of a by-law to give effect to the said petition that the question shall be submitted for the assent of the electors of a county, provided the by-law on the final reading thereof shall be approved by three-fifths of the members of the council then present, but a by-law finally passed by the said three-fifths of the members then present of a county council shall be valid and binding without the assent of the electors.

4. Section 5 of the said Act, is amended by inserting the words "or warden of the county or reeve of the village or township" after the word "town" in the second line of the said section 5, and by insertint the words "county, village or township" after the word "town" in the third line of the said section 5, and

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by inserting the words "warden or reeve" after the word "mayor" at the end of the said section 5.

5. Sub-section 6 of section 6 of the said Act is amended by inserting the words "warden or reeve" after the word "mayor" wherever the same occurs in the said sub-section 6.

Rev. Stat., c. 190, s. 6, sub-s. 2, amended.

6. Sub-section 2 of section 7 of the said Act is amended by inserting the words "county, village or township" after the word "town" in the said sub-section.

7. Sub-section 2 of section 13 of the said Act is amended by inserting the words "or in counties" after the words "cities" in the fifth line of the said sub-section, and the words "villages or townships" after the word "towns" in the sixth line of the said sub-section.

Rev. Stat., c. 190, s.13, sub-s. 2, amended.

8. The several forms in the schedule of the said Act may be altered or modified to adapt them to the provisions hereof. Rev. Stat., c. 190, s. 2 sub-s. 2, ss. 3, 4, 5, and 12, and s. 13, sub-s. 3, amended.

Rev. Stat., c. 190., schedule amended.

APPENDIX C

SPECIFICATIONS
FOR WORK TO BE DONE
ON JACKSON PARK, - July 14, 1905
GALT, ONT.

The work to be done is to build certain drives and walks, to clear and grade certain areas in accordance with the following specifications and Grading Plan furnished by Frederick G. Todd, Landscape Architect, to lay certain drains, sewers and gutters, and to construct catch basins according to the directions of the engineer.

CLEARING.

Trees and shrubs standing in the way of drives and walks and such others as may be indicated by the Landscape Architect are to be cut. All loose stones, blasted rocks, material and refuse not needed in the subsequent work are to be removed from the grounds.

GRADING.

All surfaces required to be graded are to be given such grades and slopes as are shown on the Grading Plan and cross sections, or else according to the directions of the Landscape Architect. The grades shown on the Grading Plan indicate the surface elevation required after a winter's settlement of the fill. In excavation, if rocks or poor soil lies within one foot of the proposed surface the same must be removed and replaced with good top soil. The brook and pond must be excavated to the grades indicated by the Grading Plan. Any surplus material from excavation of pond may be used for filling in low ground if deemed suitable by the Landscape Architect.

DRIVES.

The drives are to be twenty feet wide. The subgrade is to be twelve below finished wearing level, it is to be crowned six inches in the centre rolled and compacted with a steam roller. On it is to be placed one seven inch layer of large stones well and closely laid, crowned and compacted, over this will succeed a three inch layer of broker stone of macadam — size, well settled, wetted in, voids filled, and the whole thoroughly rolled with steam roller, after which two inches of fine clean gravel surface dressing is to be well swept into the voids until full. The drives are to be thoroughly watered and rolled alternately with a steam roller until the surface is hard and compact. Care is to be exercised throughout this operation to keep the grade and crown of the drives true.

WALKS.

The walks are to be six feet wide, the subgrade is to be six inches below finished level. The courses of stone are to be as follows:

One three inch layer of large stones, one two inch layer of broker stone, and one inch surface dressing of fine gravel. The whole of the material to be placed in work as described under drives, using tamper for subgrade and a heavy hand roller.

STAKING.

Before the work is commenced an engineer will set the necessary stakes for elevation and outlines. He will mark on the stakes the required cut or fill and the contractor is to take such precautions as to preserve the date as will prevent the necessity of subsequent staking, which will be done at the expense of the contractor.

PROTECTION OF TREES.

All trees which are to be saved must be protected from injury during progress of work and the contractor is to be held reliable for any damage to trees or shrubbery, the amount to be determined by the Landscape Architect.

The contractor is to supply all labor, tools and repairs of same and is to provide at his own expense all materials called for by the plans and specifications or required for the work, except such material as may be obtained on the ground.

GENERAL PROVISIONS.

The contractor is to make any reasonable change from the plans which may be directed by the Landscape Architect without extra charge, provided that it does not involve the use of an increased amount of labor or materials.

The Landscape Architect shall have the right, with the assent of the owner, to order changes or omissions, and the contractor is to agree to give or receive, as the case may be, an al-

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lowance to be determined by the Landscape Architect for changes by which the cost of the work to him is materially increased or diminished.

The contractor is not to use any material deemed unsuitable by the Landscape Architect.

The Landscape Architect shall be the sole authority for determining the meaning of any part of the plans and specifications and he shall determine all differences between the owner and contractor as to quantity or quality of materials or labor.

APPENDIX D

THE BOARD OF PARK MANAGEMENT
TOWN OF GALT

THIS AGREEMENT made in duplicate this first day of June A.D. 1905.

BETWEEN

FREDERICK G. TODD of the City of Montreal in the Province of Quebec, Landscape Architect, hereinafter called the Architect
-and-
Of the First Part: *THE BOARD OF PARK MANAGEMENT of the Town of Galt* in the County of Waterloo hereinafter called the Board,
Of the Second Part:
WITNESSETH as follows:-

1. The said Architect hereby agrees to furnish the Board with a topographical survey of the Parks known as Jackson Park and High Park, the charges therefore to be as follows, the transit man the sum of $4.50 per day of ten hours, for assistant the sum of $3.00 per day of ten hours. The Architect hereby agrees to furnish competent men at the said rate of wages. The topographical survey of Jackson Park is to conform to the following:-

(a) Locate accurately all the boundaries and the adjacent public roads.

(b) Given cross sections of park and lines parallel with the Government road at intervals of 200' or show 1 foot contours over entire park whichever is preferred.

(c) Locate all streams, roads and trees, bridges and the outlines of thick woods within the park.

The topographical survey of High Park is to conform to the following:-

(a) Locate the boundaries, walks, trees and top and bottom of each terrace slope.

2. The Architect hereby agrees to prepare plans for the Park known as Jackson Park to the satisfaction of the Board as follows:-

(a) A general design and a written report in connection therewith.

(b) A planting plan and specifications.

(c) A grading plan and specifications.

For the general design and report thereon the Architect is to be paid the sum of $150.00. For the planting plan and specifications the Architect is to be paid the sum of $100.00. For the grading plan and specifications the Architect is to be paid the sum of $125.00.

3. The Architect hereby agrees to furnish the Board with the following plans for High Park.

(a) Design and Report.

(b) Planting Plan.

For the design and report thereon the Architect is to be paid the sum of $25.00. For the planting plan the Architect is to be paid the sum of $25.00.

The Architect hereby agrees to furnish the Board with written suggestions in regard to a general design for the improvement of Dickson Park and is to receive therefor the sum of $15.00

The Architect hereby agrees to furnish the Board with a design for Victoria Park staked out on the ground and a written report thereon for which he is to receive the sum of $125.00.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties hereto have hereunto set their heands and seals.

Signed, sealed and delivered
in the presence of:

Alex C. Fleming

The Board of Park Management of Town of Galt
Ron Culloch
Chairman
Frederick G. Todd

FREDERICK G. TODD

Landscape Architect

MONTREAL, P.Q.

Member American Society of Landscape Architects

The following list of my clients, since opening my office in Montreal, Jan. 1st, 1900, is given, that Architects and others may be able to refer to work which has been executed or which is being carried out.

My business is the laying out of grounds, either large or small, in such a manner as to make the buildings more effective and the grounds more enjoyable and useful.

I give verbal advice, make general or detail plans for the location of buildings, drives and walks; for the grading of grounds, and the placing and design of gardens, flower borders, and shrubberies.

Advice given for the scientific pruning and treatment of shade trees, forest trees, shrubberies, and for the thinning and aesthetic development of woods and forest.

I can usually send assistants to make surveys, and to supervise construction work or planting, if the client so desires.

Circular of professional methods and charges on application.

CANADA

H. MONTAGUE ALLAN, Esq., Montreal.
President Merchants Banks of Canada.
J.B. ALLAN, esq., Montreal.
R.B. ANGUS, Esq., Montreal.
Director, C.P.R.
LOUIS BOYER, Esq., Montreal.
Dandurand, Brodeur & Boyer.
A.H. CAMPBELL, Esq., Toronto.
CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY
St. Andrew s Hotel and Land Development.
E.S. CLOUSTON, Esq., Montreal.
General Manager Bank of Montreal.
ST. GEORGE DILLON, Esq., Montreal.
Bellhouse, Dillon & Co.
DOMINION GOVERNMENT.
Ottawa Improvement Commission.
HON. W.C. EDWARDS, Ottawa.
HON. L.J. FORGET, Montreal.
L.J. Forget & Co.
HON. G.T. FULFORD, Brockville.
JAMES GARDNER, Esq., Montreal.
Hodgson, Sumner & Co.
T.E. HODGSON, Esq., Montreal.
Hodgson, Sumner & Co.
C.R. HOSMER, Esq., Montreal.
President Ogilvie Flour Mills Co.
A.E. KEMP, Esq., M.P., Toronto.
Kemp Mfg. Co.
W.A. KEMP, Esq., Toronto.
Kemp Mfg. Co.
J.C. KING, Esq., Montreal.
President Warden King & Son Co.
R.D. McGIBBON, Esq., Montreal.
McGibbon, Casgrain, Ryan & Mitchell.
ROBERT MEIGHEN, Esq., Montreal.
President Lake of the Woods Milling Co.
S.F. MOREY, Esq., Sherbrooke.
JAMES MUNIS, Winnipeg.
MOUNT MURRAY SEIGNIORY, Murray Bay.
MOUNT ROYAL CLUB, Montreal.
FREDERIC NICHOLS, Esq., Toronto.
General Manager Canada Foundry Co.
OLIVET BAPTIST CHURCH, Montreal.
E.B. OSLER, Esq., M.P., Toronto.
Osler & Hammond.
QUEBEC RAILWAY LIGHT & POWER CO.
R. & O. NAV. CO.
Manoir Richelieu, Murray Bay.
JAMES ROSS, Esq., Montreal.
President Dominion Coal Company.
ROYAL MONTREAL GOLF CLUB.
SHERBROOKE, City of.
DR. D.M. STIMPSON' Murray Bay.
ST. JAMES CEMETERY, Toronto.
ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL, Toronto.
TORONTO GOLF CLUB.
TRINITY COLLEGE, Toronto.
WESTMOUNT, Town of.
WINNIPEG PARKS BOARD.

APPENDIX E

FREDERICK G. TODD,
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
MONTREAL, P.Q. JULY, 1904
CIRCULAR AS TO PROFESSIONAL METHODS AND CHARGES

My business is the supplying of advice with respect to the arrangement of land for use and the accompanying landscape for pleasure, to the owners of country and suburban estates, park commissions, hotel proprietors and persons or corporations desiring to lay out suburban neighborhoods or summer resorts. I consult with owners, architect, engineers and gardeners respecting the placing of buildings, the laying out of roads, the grading of surfaces, the treatment of existing woods and shrubbery, and the placing and arrangement of new plantations.

Preliminary Visit

A preliminary visit and consultation on the ground is first necessary to enable me to acquaint myself with the client's wishes, and with the physical and financial condition of the problem that I may suggest the most suitable methods of procedure. It sometimes happens that verbal suggestions can be made on the spot sufficient to secure the proper treatment of the place without plans or further advice.

Plans

The most satisfactory result in any but the smallest places will be obtained by having plans made. These plans are based on a topographical map furnished by the client, and where it is known that plans drawn to scale will be required, it often saves the expense of one visit, if a survey is made of the grounds before my preliminary visit.

GENERAL PLAN.-The general plan shows the proposed location of buildings, drives, walks, trees, and shrubbery, and the suggested modification of existing woods, to open views or help the general effect of the landscape.

The most important elevations are given in order to assist in grading. When the general plan has been completed satisfactorily, detailed grading and planting plans may be prepared if needed. If a skilled superintendent or engineer is employed on the work, he is often capable of interpreting and executing the general plan, with occasional visits from me. On the other hand, I am always prepared to make detailed or working drawings, and to supervise, in the same manner as an architect, day work or contract work, if the client so desires.

GRADING PLAN.-The grading plan shows exactly the designed modelling of the earth, and can be readily carried out by anyone, with the aid of stakes set by an engineer.

PLANTING PLAN.-The planting plan showns in detail the exact position of each kind of plant. This is very important where one is not intimately acquainted with the habits of the different plants and the effects they produce. When the planting plan has been approved, it is generally my custom to order the plants for my clients, for ordering large quantities annually, and dealing with a large number of nurseries, I know where the different varieties can be obtained to the best advantage and am enabled to secure very low prices for my clients. I assume no responsibility for miscarriages or failures, but when requested to do so, I send a trained assistant to superintend the planting and see that plants are true to name and in a healthy condition when received.

Charges

My charge for a preliminary visit is ordinarily $25.00, but may vary from $10.00 to $100.00, according to the size and nature of the work. If a written report is desired, an additional charge is made. All travelling and lodging expenses are to be refunded by the client. The charge for a general plan may vary from $15.00 for a small place to some hundreds of dollars for a large park; that of a grading or planting plan from $25.00 up. The charges for a general plan for the subdivision of property is $5.00 an acre for less than fifty acres; $4.50 an acre for more than fifty and less than one hundred acres; $4.00 an acre for more than one hundred acres, unless the area exceeds three hundred acres, when the charge will be less. These charges cover only my professional services as a designer, and all expenses of tracing maps and preparing working drawings, of printing, of estimating, and ordering plants, and of superintending planting, must be refunded by the client.

The charge for ordering plants is five per cent of the amount ordered.

When personally superintending construction work, planting or the cutting of trees to open up views, my charge is $25.00 a day and expenses.

Montreal, January 1st, 1900.

APPENDIX F

John C. Olmsted "The True Purpose of A Large Public Park, in ***First Report of the Park and Outdoor Art Association****, Louisville, Kentucky, 1897, p. 12.*

By large public park is not meant one covering more than a certain number of acres, but one large enough to contain a complete natural landscape, where the boundaries will not be obstrusive, where city conditions will not be unduly apparent, where one may stroll over hill and dale, across meadows and through woods, always amid natural surroundings, for hours without twice following the same routes; where one may come again and again without becoming familiar with all its interesting localities and natural features; where many thousands of visitors may be enjoying the scenery at the same time without crowding each other; where those who especially seek seclusion may find parts so remote from the boundaries that even if city houses are not completely hidden they are reduced in the distant perspective of inconspicuous proportions as compared with the foliage of trees and other natural objects in the foreground; so remote that the roar of street traffic is less noticeable than the rustle of foliage stirred by the breeze or than the songs of birds or sounds of insects.

That the scenery of a park should be beautiful no one would deny, but that it should be natural needs explanation. There can hardly be such a thing as absolutely natural scenery in a public park near a large city. Fires, pasturing, cultivation, wood-chopping, the destruction or driving away of the wild animals, wild birds and insects, and the introduction of others, have long since ended purely natural conditions about every large city, leaving at best only a general resemblance to natural scenery. Even if a tract of land is still to be found in a comparatively natural condition while in private ownership, it would not remain entirely in that condition after being properly fitted for and used as a public park.

With these limitations in mind, what is meant by the natural scenery of a large public park may be described as ordinarily

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either open meadow, open grassy hillsides or rolling ground, open groves of trees, with good turf, dense woods, borders of shrubbery, or low woody or herbaceous undergrowth, water in river, brook, pond or pool and, more rarely, cliffs or ledges of rock. These principal features of the scenery again may be divided into their elements of earth or rock surface, water surface and foliage, either ground cover, shrubbery, or trees.